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SLOVAKIA is published periodically by the Slovak League of America, a cultural and civic federation of Americans of Slovak descent.

The chief purpose of SLOVAKIA is to promote a better understanding and appreciation of the Slovak nation and its long struggle for freedom and independence.

As Americans, members of the Slovak League of America firmly believe that the Slovak nation, just as all nations, has an inherent and God-given right to freedom and independence. They are dedicated to the cause of the American way of life, Slovak freedom and world peace and are determined to oppose the plague of Communism and all other totalitarian political systems.

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SLOVAKIA —

THE OLDEST STATE IN CENTRAL EUROPE

PROF. FRANCIS HRUŠOVSKÝ

The world, slowly but surely, is learning that the small Slovak nation in the Danube basin is asserting its right to independent national existence.

Since a nation that is relatively small is concerned — a nation which through the fault of its larger neighbors for long ages did not have the possibility of appearing independently before the eyes of the cultural world — some European and non-European nations were not conscious of the existence of the Slovaks as an individual nation and did not, therefore, evince any interest in their existence.

And yet, in the case of the Slovaks, we are concerned with a nation that deserves attention and has the right to strive for a position in the Carpatho-Danube area that belongs to an individual nation with an ancient past and a rich, cultural tradition.

The Slovaks have remained a small nation, but they are neither a young nor a new nation. **They are the oldest nation on the central Danube and they were the first nation in Central Europe which had its own independent state.**

The historical destiny of the Slovak nation was determined first of all by the geographical position of the territory which the Slovaks colonized after their arrival in Central Europe in the sixth century. When the Slovaks crossed the Carpathians and established their permanent colonies on the banks of the central Danube and its tributaries, they occupied the territory that lay on the very western edge of the Slavonic world and was in direct contact with the eastern countries of the Germans.

The more numerous, militarily stronger, politically more developed and culturally more advanced Germans, especially since the times of Emperor Charles the Great (768—814), exerted a pressure on their Slavonic neighbors. This political and cultural pressure of the Germans was strongest in the area settled by the numerous small Slovak tribes.

It was only natural that the small Slovak tribes, threatened by the growing pressure of their German neighbors, began to realize more clearly their mutual family ties and felt the need of uniting their forces in defense of their common interests which were threatened by a common danger.

By such a unification of the small Slovak principalities already in the first half of the ninth century, there arose on the central Danube the Slovak state — known in historical literature as the Great Moravian Empire.

The Slovak state — the nucleus and main castle of which were near the Morava river — was the first state organized on the territory of Central Europe.

The geographical position of the Slovak territory was the reason why the Slovaks organized their own state as a defense against outside danger. The Slovak rulers who built and managed this state proved that the Slovaks orientated themselves early and well to the

situation that evolved near the central Danube and they were quite able and capable to defend their vital interests and to decide their own destiny.

The territory of the Slovak state was gradually extended to include the territories of neighboring Slavonic tribes. It became less dependent on the Frankish empire, and the military might of the Slovak princes increased to such an extent that they successfully repelled the attacks of the German kings.

In the second half of the ninth century — during the reign of the prudent Rastislav (847—870), the belligerent Svätopluk (870—894), whom contemporary sources called King, and his heroic successor Mojmir II (894—906) — the Slovak state had gained such an international position that Slovak princes could make and keep diplomatic contacts with the Emperor's court in Constantinople and the Holy See.

Slovak rulers were allies of the Emperor of Constantinople against Bulgar-Germanic coalition, and maintained active ties with the Vatican as Christian rulers because they wanted their country to have its own church organization and be an independent ecclesiastical province.

The Slovaks came into contact with Christianity right at the outset of their history in Central Europe. In the seat of the Slovak princes in Nitra already in 830 there stood a Christian church — the first Christian church on the territory of the western Slavs. The Slovaks received the Christian faith under the leadership of their princes and appropriated unto themselves all the attainments of Christian civilization and cultural progress.

The Slovak state from its very inception was a Christian state. The new faith — due to the merits of western and eastern missionaries, especially the merits of Sts. Cyril and Methodius — was so deeply rooted in the Slovaks that no pagan reaction could grow on Slovak territory. Slovak Christianity became so firm, in fact, that Slovakia already in the ninth century became the mediator of the Christian faith and Christian culture even in neighboring countries to the east and performed this function even in the centuries that followed. In the very first centuries of its Christian life, Slovakia became a strong support of the Christian faith in the Danube basin and for whole ages it was a bastion of the Christian culture which was threatened by the invasion of eastern barbarians.

Slovak rulers tried to solidify and safeguard the independence of the Slovak state with the help of an independent ecclesiastical organization and the aid of an independent ecclesiastical hierarchy. King Svätopluk, on the advice of Archbishop Methodius, went so far in his efforts that in 879 he sent a special delegation to Pope John VIII and placed himself, his princes, magnates and people under the protection of the Holy See. The Papal See accepted the Slovak state under the protection of St. Peter, and the successors of Pope John VIII most condescendingly showed their paternal altruism to the Slovak rulers and their anxiety for the fate of the ecclesiastical organization on the territory of the Slovak state.

The Slovak rulers and the Slovak people sacrificed everything to preserve the independence of their country. They fought valiantly against their enemies in the east and the west. The Slovaks were greatly outnumbered and the continual defensive battles sapped the

blood of their nation. Finally they were overcome by the superior forces of the enemy — the Germans and the Magyars — at the beginning of the tenth century and Slovakia lost its independence. At the beginning of the 11th century the Slovak territory became a part of the Hungarian state.

Slovakia lost its independence in the tenth century, but the Slovak nation did not lose its rights to a free life. The picture of the Slovak state of the ninth century has been preserved throughout the long centuries in the mind of the Slovak nation and, revived in the works of Slovak writers and poets, has maintained in all Slovak generations the hope that Slovakia once again shall be an independent state and the free homeland of all Slovaks.



PEOPLE'S COURTS IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA

As a result at Teheran and Yalta, so-called People's Courts were immediately organized in the countries that were "liberated" by the Soviet armies. Naturally these courts were set up on the pattern on those in the Soviet countries. In Bulgaria, for example, they were set up in September 1944 and in Hungary in January 1945, even though the war was still on and there were no governments elected by the people in those respective countries. These two states are still under Soviet occupation (Paris Peace Conference) and so it actually was not possible to conduct free and democratic elections there.

People's Courts, then, were established on the incentive of outside countries. This proves the veracity of the statement: "might makes right." These courts quite obviously rendered such verdicts as were prescribed by the power of the state or by the power of the foreign state to which the state in question was subject.

Beneš, as the president of Czechoslovakia, immediately after the "liberation" ruled the state on the basis of the decrees he himself issued. He received the authority to rule by decrees from the State Council which he personally appointed in London. So that these decrees might have a legal color, the National Assembly in Prague was elected in 1946 and its deputies approved all of the "presidential" decrees of Beneš. It is doubtful, however, whether these decrees were constitutional and whether the elected Constitutional National Assembly was actually elected democratically in 1946.

The system of People's Courts developed independently of each other in the so-called historic lands (Bohemia and Moravia) and in Slovakia.

As president of the state, Beneš issued the decree No. 16/1945 for Bohemia and Moravia on June 19, 1945. With this decree Beneš established the People's Courts in Bohemia and Moravia.

It is interesting to note here that this decree carries the signature not only of the President, but also the signatures of several Czech ministers, who today are proclaiming in free America that they are democrats, that they "fought" against dictatorship, etc. These same pseudodemocrats had the audacity to form the Council of Free Czechoslovakia. The names of the ministers on that decree

are: Dr. Hubert Ripka, Dr. Jaroslav Stránsky, General Hasal, Dr. Ferjenčík and Minister Majer.

According to that presidential decree a People's Court consisted of five members: one was a judge by profession and the other four members were "from the people." President Beneš reserved the right for himself to personally appoint the president and the vice-president of the People's Court, while the whole Prague government appointed the other members. Of course, Beneš and his government named only such people to the People's Court on whom they could fully rely to carry out their bidding in the court. The decree stated that in rendering the verdict the members "from the people" shall vote first.

According to the decree only a citizen who was a member of one of the four political parties that were allowed by Beneš and his government could become a judge in the People's Courts. The parties prepared a list of candidates for the People's Courts; the government then named the judges of the People's Courts from these lists. The decree made it possible in many cases to appoint as People's Judge a person who was punished at various times for various transgressions and crimes.

State prosecutors for these People's Courts were appointed by the Minister of Justice, Dr. Jaroslav Stránsky. They were selected by him from a list prepared by the District People's Courts. It so happened that people without a law degree were named as representatives and prosecutors, and their ignorance of the law was responsible for many injustices.

The most interesting provision of the decree was the paragraph that allowed a person freed by the People's Court to be tried on the same score by the regular process of law. Later a so-called Honorary Court was established before which could be tried all those who were freed. The State Attorney General and prosecutor had the right to try within three months any person who was freed by the Courts. So a person that was freed by the Courts had to wait three whole months to find out whether he was actually cleared of all charges or whether he shall be put on trial again.

The procedure in a People's Court began with a speech by the state prosecutor, who reminded the members of the Court what the state demanded in the case. The president of the People's Court had the right only to read the testimony of the witnesses and experts, as well as the testimony of the accused from the police records; this was done so that the accused and the witnesses could not say anything else during the opening hearing but what had already been said at the police station.

There was no appeal from a verdict of the People's Court. When the verdict of death was rendered, the order was to be executed within two hours. Beneš did not want to be bothered with appeals for mercy from condemned people. He thus sanctioned all judicial murders by not wanting to use his constitutional right to change a verdict of death to one of life sentence.

On June 19, 1945, Beneš and his ministers also issued Decree No. 17/1945, whereby the so-called National Court was instituted. It consisted of seven members and took care of the biggest "war criminals."

But Beneš and his ministers were not satisfied with just the People's Courts and the National Court. On October 27, 1945, Beneš issued a new decree in which he gave the District National Committee the right to try all citizens that had sinned against so-called "national honor." Before this court were tried all persons whom the regular court, the People's Court and the National Court had no cause to prosecute.

In Slovakia in 1945, Dr. Joseph Lettrich's Slovak National Council was the body supreme in all legislative, judicial and executive matters. There is no mention of this Council in the Constitution of Czechoslovakia. The Slovak National Council consisted of members of the political parties allowed by Prague. All the ordinances of Lettrich's Council were without constitutional foundation and yet thousands of persons were thrown into jail, placed against the wall or hanged because of them.

The ordinance of Lettrich's National Council about the establishment of the People's Courts was issued on May 15, 1945, under the number 33/1945. Under this illegal ordinance we find the signature of the great "democrat," who today is living a free life in America: Dr. Joseph Lettrich.

On the basis of this illegal ordinance there were three kinds of People's Courts established in Slovakia: the National Court in Bratislava, the capital of Slovakia; the District People's Court in every administrative district; and the Common People's Courts in every Slovak community.

Any citizen and any office could place a complaint against any citizen. No objections were allowed against the accusation, and no appeal was possible against a verdict of the People's Courts.

The National Court in Bratislava was composed of seven members, and only the president of the court had to be a judge by calling. The members of the National Court were named by Lettrich's National Council on motion made by the legal political parties. Political parties also named the members of the district and common courts.

A legal defense counsel could only be a lawyer whom the Commissar of Justice in Bratislava recognized. An accused person could not freely select his counsel.

To this ordinance of Lettrich's National Council, the Board of Commissars issued articles of procedure (No. 55/1945), and these, too, were signed the great "democrat" Lettrich.

The People's Courts in Slovakia were valid until December 31, 1947. After that date only the regularly instituted courts could handle the remaining cases, keeping in line, of course, with the regulations concerning the People's Courts.

In February 1948, the Parliament at Prague—elected in 1946—unanimously approved a law, whereby all regulations concerning Czech and Slovak National Courts and People's Courts were again in force. President Beneš sanctioned even this law; it may be found in the Czechoslovak legal code under No. 33/1948.

On the basis of this law, persecution began anew and very many of those citizens who were released by the courts found themselves once again before the People's Courts.

This is in short a description of the legal structure of the People's Courts in Czechoslovakia.

We must regard the whole People's judicial system as an act of revenge of people, who took over Slovakia, Bohemia and Moravia in 1945.

Beneš placed all his personal opponents before the court. Rudolph Beran, premier of Czechoslovakia, spent four years in a German concentration camp. That did not save him. He was given 20 years and his party was outlawed. Beneš thought that by outlawing the Agrarian Party, all Agrarians would join his party, the Czech National Socialist Party (often referred to as the Czech Nazi Party), and so his party would become the largest in the Republic. The condemnation of Beran created a great scandal in the whole of Czechoslovakia. No one doubted that Beran was dealt with contrary to all principles of justice.

The chairman of Beneš's party, Dr. Peter Zenkl, also was a minister in the two post-Munich governments, and yet he was not tried by the People's Court. Until recently he headed the Council of Free Czechoslovakia and together with Lettrich still poses as a great "democrat."

According to the regulations governing the People's Courts, only Beneš had the right to grant mercy. Yet he did not grant mercy to any one of his political opponents. Nor did he show any mercy to the president of the Slovak Republic, Dr. Joseph Tiso. He explained clumsily that Lettrich's Slovak National Council had sent the Tiso matter to Prague without a motion or recommendation. The ministerial council in Prague gave the appeal for mercy to Beneš, but he preferred not to use his power of mercy and, as a result, the Catholic priest and first president of the Slovak Republic, Dr. Joseph Tiso, was hung.

But even that was not enough for Beneš and his government. The Church strictly forbids the cremation of corpses. Reports had it that the dead body of Dr. Tiso was burnt in the crematory at Brno.

Beneš had his propaganda give him a nice name: "President-BUILDER." But in Bohemia and in Slovakia as well Beneš is called: "The President-Avenger."

That is how the people judge Beneš and his political companions. In this case the voice of the people is truly the voice of God.—(S. O.-'49)

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WHO SAID IT?

"I am against any sort of totalitarianism, and I won't serve any cause that would mean that in the long run. . . . We hear a great deal about the Iron Curtain. I assure you there is no Iron Curtain. We are living next to a great power. We cooperate with them as much as we can. But we are keeping ourselves free. That's my final plea, or whatever you want to call it. . . . I am not frightened by economic changes in Czechoslovakia. But I am terribly interested in the inner freedom. That's what I am trying to devote the remaining days of my life to. It's the freedom of the individual, immortal, human soul." — (Ján Masaryk, Address before the Chamber of Commerce of the State of New York, Jan. 9, 1947; NEW YORK TIMES, 1-10-47).

WHY SEPARATE SLOVAK POLITICS?

(kl —) — Long before the putsch of February 1948, the communists of Czecho-Slovakia labeled all Slovaks who opposed them as Fascists and Nazis. When they came into power — by the graces of Beneš and Stalin — they got rid of all opposition in the usual Red manner.

On the other hand, the followers of the ruinous policies of Dr. Edward Beneš call the Slovaks "Fascists and Nazis," because they insist on a separate Slovak state, the renewal of the Slovakia that they had proclaimed an independent state before World War II began. Lately they are going a bit farther than that; they have decided to prove that the Slovaks who had anything to do with the Slovak state, — the Hlinka Home Guard, and the Slovak People's Party — also collaborated with the Communists, especially during the 1946 parliamentary elections. That, of course, is just plain silly, because it was not the Czechs or the followers of Beneš, but the Slovaks and the followers of Hlinka and Tiso, who openly opposed the Communists. Not only since 1948, but during the life of the first and second republics as well.

The Slovaks are through with all forms of Czecho-Slovakia. They have had their fill of Magyars, Czechs and Germans. They are determined to fight for an independent Slovak state within or without a European federation. The Slovak Republic was destroyed against their will and illegally by the United Nations, and they still want to know why.

Czecho-Slovak opponents of Slovak independence qualify the formation of the Slovak state as a betrayal of the Czechs and Czecho-Slovakia. They have no facts to prove that. They rest satisfied that Beneš had said so. What about the Slovaks themselves? Have they nothing to say about a matter that vitally concerns them? When all facts are considered in the light of the truth, we shall have to come to the conclusion that it was not the Slovak leaders who betrayed the Czechs and Czecho-Slovakia, but the Czech leaders — the Czech Socialists, especially the Czech Nazis (Czech National Socialists) headed by Dr. Edward Beneš.

The difficult situation of Czecho-Slovakia in 1938—1939 is still fresh in our minds. What was responsible for that situation? It was the ruinous policy of Dr. Edward Beneš, who served many years as Foreign Minister and then President of Czecho-Slovakia. The Slovak deputies often cautioned Beneš to change his course, but to no avail. That the Slovaks were able to get out of that hopeless situation and kept themselves not only above water throughout the war, but progressed immensely, that fact itself speaks in favor of the Slovak state.

Now, take the situation that Slovakia finds itself in at the present time. Who is responsible for that situation?

During the war the Slovak nation lived in the conviction that its future life after the conclusion of the war and the defeat of Germany would be able to develop only alongside and after the manner of the western democracies. The influence of German politics was undesirable. Let us only recall that the London broadcast was heard publicly

in Slovakia and that despite the fact that it was influenced by people who had a most negative stand toward the Slovak state. It is known that many aviators of the western armies found refuge in Slovakia and even the military authorities treated them as guests. It is also known that many Czechs, fleeing to the west, found refuge and aid in Slovakia.

Czech politicians — specifically Beneš who posed as President of Czechoslovakia — went to Moscow despite the warnings of the western powers at a time when the formation of a Polish-Czechoslovak Federation was being negotiated. It was there that they sold out the Czech and Slovak nations to communistic Moscow. The Poles were embarrassed; any federation with the Czechs became a dead issue. This was not the result of a political compromise and good will. It was a singular triumph for Gottwald and Stalin.

Then came 1944. It was evident that the end of the war was not far off. The Slovaks were preparing for a new life; plans were being made for a Christian and democratic order without the tutorship of the German Reich. A genuine Slovak revolt was included in the plans. Moscow and Beneš knew about these plans but they were determined to cross up the Slovaks. They could not allow the Slovaks, who were for an independent Slovakia and sympathized with the west, to rebel against the Germans.

Beneš planned the strategy with Stalin. Soviet soldiers and saboteurs were parachuted into the mountains of Slovakia and the fake "national" rebellion of August 1944 was prepared. The result: about 70,000 Slovak dead, persecutions by the enraged Nazis, murder and destruction by both the desperate Nazis and the Red saboteurs. Soon after the war came the "Košice Agreement" which was cooked up in Moscow, and the fate of Slovakia was sealed.

The Slovaks were disappointed. They expected a victory of right and truth, but had to be satisfied again with subordination. But they did not betray their Christian and democratic traditions and convictions. They proved that in the 1946 elections. Little Slovakia, overshadowed by the Red giant, spoke decisively in favor of the west. In Bohemia and Moravia — the CZECH lands — the Reds bested all parties; with the socialists they had a decided majority. In Slovakia, the best the Reds could do — even with the help of the Czech Reds, Beneš's spies and Secret Police, and the army — was about 32 per cent of the total vote.

The Slovak Democratic Party — led by the political unknown Dr. Jozef Lettrich — became the victorious party with about 62 per cent of the total vote. Not by any of its own merits. The followers of Hlinka and Tiso — the overwhelming majority of the Slovak population — had little choice in the matter. Their party — the largest political party in pre-war Slovakia — was outlawed by the Red regime of Beneš. They could vote only for the candidates of the Communist and the Democratic Parties and, so, chose the lesser of two evils — the Democratic Party led by Lettrich. It was a vote against Communism. Of course, the Reds were furious.

But Dr. Lettrich and other leaders of the Democratic Party failed to take advantage of the situation. They betrayed the confidence of the voters by continuing the Sovietophile policy of Beneš.

The Reds of Slovakia lost the elections decisively and yet won the most important posts in the state! The voters of Slovakia had decided for a separate Slovak policy, but the leaders of the party blindly continued to follow Beneš and Moscow in their anti-Slovak policy.

A group of bankrupt collaborators with Beneš and Stalin is playing the same politics today that brought disaster to the Slovak nation in February 1948. This group has organized the "COUNCIL OF FREE CZECHOSLOVAKIA" which is anything but representative of the will of the Slovak and Czech peoples in America, at home or elsewhere in emigration. Most of the members of this Council are former members of the NATIONAL FRONT of Czechoslovakia, a fact that they would rather not be reminded of. The Slovaks want no part of them or their Council. They despise them as Red collaborators.

After the terrible experience of the past, the Slovaks cannot trust the very people who betrayed their interests and collaborated with their enslavers. As in the elections of 1946, the Slovaks in emigration today proclaim themselves against the Council of Free Czechoslovakia that is comprised of the men who in a large measure are responsible for the unfortunate situation the Slovak and Czech nations find themselves in today. They are for a separate Slovak policy in emigration and in Slovakia. No more do they want a common policy with the Czechs. Slovak leaders have learned their lesson after living with the Czechs in a common state for 20 years; they remember Munich 1938, December 12, 1943, and the post-war period. They have lost their appetite to hazard with the life of their people.

Slovak political leaders have on many occasions in the past shown their good will to come to some sensible agreement. They pleaded, begged and threatened many times, but to no avail. The only answer they received was the gallows and the courts. Let the Czechs, therefore, not reproach them for deciding to go their own way. They gladly accept full responsibility for the outcome. The Slovaks are convinced that they can thus better safeguard Slovakia from the catastrophies and sufferings that were her lot in the past decades, when she was ruled by others.

* * * *

WHO SAID IT?

"Russia is for the liberation of Czechoslovakia... Russia is the strongest Slav brother and must be regarded as such. . . RUSSIA IS THE SOURCE OF TRUE DEMOCRACY AND FREEDOM THAT OUR PEOPLE IS EXPECTING." — Dr. Edward Beneš, Chicago L'UDOVÝ DENNÍK, April 21, 1939.

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"For Russia the importance of the (Czechoslovak-Soviet) treaty lies in the fact she has another ally whose leader, Dr. Benes, is highly esteemed in Allied councils, and in the fact that Czechoslovakia WILL NOT participate in any European FEDERATION whose purpose is re-establishment of a policy of the cordon sanitaire. This was the second time Dr. Benes and Czechoslovakia have blazed a trail toward amity of the Soviet Union and neighboring states in eastern Europe." — (NEW YORK TIMES, 12-13-43).

THE CAUSES OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA'S DISINTEGRATION

I

(k)—“The Slovaks, dissatisfied with autonomy within the framework of a diminished Czechoslovak state, went after independence as their ultimate goal. For that their leaders were accused of treason. I doubt whether that was in place. . . .” (John F. Montgomery, former U. S. Ambassador to Hungary: “Hungary, the Satellite against its own Will.”)

The disintegration of Czechoslovakia in 1939 and her agony in the fall of 1938 will form interesting chapters in the history of the Europe created by treaties from 1919—1920. During that memorable 1938 and the spring that followed the Munich “capitulation” of the western democracies before German expansion, it was not only a state that collapsed, but also the whole European political and strategic system — a legal and moral system.

In Slovakia some of the foremost personalities were executed, thousands exiled and other thousands were jailed because they were accused of “causing the collapse of Czechoslovakia.” But some of the Slovak leaders were fortunate to escape from their country. They were tried in absentia, sentenced to the gallows or hard labor for many years. Czech propaganda, favoring the followers of the late Dr. Beneš, refers to those Slovaks as traitors, fascists and nazis even today.

Will the accusation stand up before the objective judgment of history, or at least before the impartial criticism of factors who are better acquainted with the causes of the European drama of 1938—1939 and followed the whole struggle for peace, or who in some cases had even taken part in it?

There is no doubt that Slovak political leaders did not even think of playing so important a role as is ascribed to them. While they had participated in the drama, their action was only a reaction to the phenomenon for which they were not responsible: they simply defended the natural rights and principles that were the foundation of an order that was the subject of a struggle between the great powers.

To ascribe to Slovak politicians such great importance, therefore, is unreal, and, as far as Czechoslovakia is concerned, it would be overestimating the internal causes of her disintegration if her ruin were ascribed exclusively to internal phenomena and the centrifugal efforts of the discontented nations and nationalities that comprised Czechoslovakia.

Czechoslovakia did not collapse only because of internal troubles. The causes of her ruination rest above all else on the fact that she was a part of the political order that Germany and several Danubian states, who had lost the first World War, were determined to ruin. It was the political order that the western European creators could not defend at the time.

The causes of the disintegration of Czechoslovakia must be sought in the European situation, especially in the moral and political crisis

of Europe and in the change in the forces and presuppositions on which the European order was being built in 1919—1920.

The blunders of Czech political factors in foreign and domestic politics hastened the disintegration and it was these blunders that were responsible even for the internal centrifugal efforts among the majority of inhabitants of Czechoslovakia. An analysis of the European political situation, as well as a closer look at the conditions in Czechoslovakia during its entire existence, leads us to that conclusion.

According to Dr. Edward Beneš, "a fatal blow was dealt from the outside" at Munich, where four great powers — England, France, Germany and Italy — decided on September 29, 1938, to annex the Sudetenland of Czechoslovakia to Germany (See: Dr. E. Beneš, *NOVÁ SLOVANSKÁ POLITIKA* — The New Slovanic Policy — Prague, 1946, pg. 48).

In reality the consequences of the Munich conference, at which representatives of the Prague government could only listen to the decision of the four great powers and silently yield to their decision or start a war against Germany forsaken by all allies — were the beginning of the end of the state that was the pillar of the political order of central Europe, the state that defended this system even when real political sense demanded that it be changed. Munich forced this system to fall and with it collapsed also Czechoslovakia. The nations situated between Germany and Russia had to suffer the consequences of this reality.

Nobody in the capitals of Europe doubted this in 1938. "All is lost," cried Winston Churchill in his parliamentary speech only six days after Munich. "Let us not try to conceal this reality from ourselves in this regard. We must now assume as certain, that all the states of central and eastern Europe will try to obtain from the triumphant Nazi power the best conditions that they shall be able to get. The system of alliances of central European states, which France thus far regarded as a guarantee of its security, was swept away, and I do not see any possibility of renewing it."

He said that the road along the Danube basin to the Black Sea, the road to Turkey, was open. Militarily and economically the states of Europe will be, in fact if not formally, drawn into the circle of a wide system of the political power of Berlin. He predicted that would happen without much resistance and probably without a shot being fired. "You shall see," said Churchill, "how from day to day, from week to week, these countries shall become hostile to us. . . ."

It was just as clear in Paris what Munich meant to France and her Danubian allies. "Germany once again is master of central Europe," André Tardieu wrote in his book *"L'année de Munich"* (pg. 168). And the last French ambassador in Berlin, M. Coulondre, said in his political report on March 19, 1939: "The Munich Pact, complemented by the German-British and Franco-German declarations, according to the German conception means the right of the Reich to organize Central and Southeastern Europe as it pleases with the unexpressed agreement or at least with the tolerance of the great western powers"

That the Germans felt that Munich gave them a free hand in Central Europe was soon demonstrated, when the great powers failed to protest the Magyar and Polish seizure of Czechoslovak territory only a month after Munich. And Munich, according to Chamberlain,

had guaranteed no further territorial changes: "I believe that under the present system of guarantees the New Czechoslovakia will find greater security than she has ever enjoyed in the past."

Germany actually was absolute master of the Danube basin. The confusion created by Munich in the southeastern states of Europe worked to the advantage of the Reich (G. Gafencu, former Rumanian minister, in his book "The Last Days of Europe.") The prestige of Geneva fell, and there was no time to organize a new system of collective security. As far as America and the Russians were concerned, the former were too far away, and the latter preferred not to intervene.

But Munich had far-reaching effects even from another standpoint, especially as far as the politics of Russia was concerned. Russia was isolated by Munich; the Kremlin was not invited to participate at Munich. With the annexation of the Sudetenland, the strategic position of Czechoslovakia was ruined. According to Walter Lippman's "USA Foreign Policy," England and France sacrificed their alliance with Russia when they surrendered Czechoslovakia to the mercy of Hitler.

We mention these things, because Munich did affect what happened later in the Danubian states and the politics of its leading statesmen after 1938. As far as Slovakia is concerned, the stand of Russia after Munich is especially interesting.

Soviet Russia not only recognized the independent Slovak Republic and established regular diplomatic contacts with her, but the Russian ambassador G. Pushkin, handing over his credentials to the president of Slovakia, Dr. Joseph Tiso, said: "Handing over to you the documents that accredit me as special ambassador and minister plenipotentiary to your Republic, nominated by the Presidency of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, I can tell you with joy that the nations of the Soviet Union have taken note of the establishment of diplomatic contacts between the Soviet Union and the Slovak Republic with deep satisfaction. As a result of war in Europe, the establishment of these contacts transcends the framework of mutual interests of both our states."

II

MUNICH AND CZECHOSLOVAKIA

When the British Prime Minister Chamberlain was confronted with the German demands relative to the Sudetenland at Godesburg, he replied to Hitler by letter on September 26 saying that "the national and economic independence of Czechoslovakia automatically would disappear if the German plan were accepted."

On September 29, 1938, this plan was accepted, nevertheless, and not only by the four powers — England, France, Italy and Germany — who participated in the Munich Conference, but on September 30 also by the Prague Government which was headed by Dr. Edward Beneš.

Was Chamberlain right about the destruction of the independence of Czechoslovakia?

If the Czechoslovak Republic formally preserved the character of an independent state even after Munich, in reality the new situation limited free decisions by the Prague Government in internal as well as in foreign policy. Furthermore, there hung over the rump state, like

a dark cloud, the knowledge that even the new situation was only temporary and that it depended entirely on the Germans when new situations would arise.

"The population of Czechoslovakia," wrote Graham Hutton in a book published in the spring of 1939, "reduced to less than 10 million people, is completely under the political, economic and military control of Germany. The new policy of the State is already working entirely in the interest of Germany and to the disadvantage of the western powers, Poland, Rumania and other Slovanic states. Its human resources are as much at the disposition of Germany as are its economic resources and the production of weapons. . . . The new Czechoslovakia has come under the rule of Germany and her borders cannot be regarded otherwise than as German borders." (*Les Nouveaux destins du Danube*, pgs. 46, 52).

Of course, it was clear to every sober observer of German policy that the Germans did not consider this advantageous situation as a definite solution. The successes of Hitler's regime after the occupation of the Rhineland in 1936, attained without great difficulties, could only encourage the Germans in their "Drang nach Osten," because for such a policy, especially as far as Czechoslovakia was concerned, they already had allies in the Magyars, but also in the over-all order of conditions in the Danube basin after 1918. The liquidation of the Czechoslovak Republic, therefore, could be clearly foreseen in 1938, and the British ambassador in Berlin, Sir Neville Henderson, wrote in his book "Failure of a Mission" (1939) that the decision to occupy Czechoslovakia was reached on March 12.

Winston Churchill, too, knew what Munich meant for Czechoslovakia, because he said in Parliament on October 5, 1938: "All is over. Silent, mournful, abandoned, broken, Czechoslovakia recedes into the darkness. . . . I venture to think that in the future the Czechoslovak state cannot be maintained as an independent entity. I think you will find that in a period of time which may be measured in years, but may be measured only by months, Czechoslovakia will be engulfed in the nazi regime. . . ."

Seton-Watson, one of the greatest admirers of the Czech nation and the former Czechoslovak Republic, remarked bluntly: "Churchill was only too true a prophet." He noted, too, that "in this period the process of disintegration was continued from within."

Even Seton-Watson regarded Munich as "the surrender of a key position to the Pan-Germans." In his "History of the Czechs and Slovaks," he goes on to say that the borders of Bohemia, one of the oldest boundaries of Europe and never changed even in the darkest days of national decline, suddenly became defenseless and the whole Danube region was surrendered to the mercy of the Germans.

In his pro-Czech and anti-Slovak "Czechoslovakia in European History," Prof. S. H. Thomson of the University of Colorado wrote: "The rump of Czechoslovakia was obviously incapable of independent economic or political existence" (pg. 348) and that "after Munich the only hope for the country's survival lay in complete reorientation toward Nazi Germany" (pg. 350), while "in the domain of economics the maimed state was completely at the mercy of Germany" (pg. 352).

We could, thus, continue to quote almost indefinitely the views

of statesmen, politicians, history professors and publicists, who saw in the Munich decision the end of Czechoslovakia and giving the Germans a free hand in central and southeastern Europe.

After the loss of the Sudetenland, the fertile Slovak valleys, Tešín and the strategic heights on the north and the Slovak border, nay even a few kilometers of land not far from Bratislava (Devín), the territory of Czechoslovakia in reality would have been able to exist independently only if every inhabitant would exert all his strength to hold the state and if maimed and demoralized Czechoslovakia had not been a small island in the German sea, which the Germans wanted to liquidate, since no one — not even the allies and creators of Czechoslovakia in Versailles — wanted to prevent them in doing that.

It was the British Prime Minister himself who said only a week after Munich that even with the greatest sympathies toward Czechoslovakia, he could not allow the British Empire to become enveigled in war under any circumstances "because of a quarrel in a faraway country between people of whom we know nothing." We know that France became a second rate military power after the Germans occupied the Saar. And disunited internally, France did not even want to shed blood for Czechoslovakia. It was thus that the Czechoslovak-Franco-Russian Treaty of 1935 became ineffective. The Soviet Union "regretted," but it could come to the aid of Czechoslovakia only if France first defended the Beneš republic.

Czechoslovakia did not get any help from the outside before Munich, and after Munich she definitely could not expect it. The English publisher, Graham Hutton, in the book quoted above (pg. 143), did not hesitate to express the view that Czechoslovakia finds herself so dependent on Germany, economically, that undoubtedly it would be better for her, from a purely objective standpoint, to establish a complete custom and exchange union with Germany, than to try to hold to the view of nominal and false independence.

That no outside help would be forthcoming was quite clear in Prague itself. Dr. Ivan Derer, **the greatest Czechoslovak of Slovak origin**, in a broadcast from Prague said among other things: "The Munich Pact not only means that France and England will not help us in the event of war, but it also means that we would find ourselves at war with Germany, because we did not want to give up the Sudeten-German territory. In this war France and England would be obligated to help the Germans and not us."

The Czechs were the chosen people of Czechoslovakia, even though they formed less than half the population. They always lived in the historical past, boasting of the glory of their kings and the "historical lands" of the Bohemian Crown. Their minds were on the enterprises, the factories and the lands which Munich gave their three neighbors. Masaryk and Beneš had continued the legend of Libuša and Přemysl, that the Czech people was a ruling nation and the other peoples of Czechoslovakia — the Slovaks, Germans, Magyars, Poles, Ukrainians and Rusins — existed only to serve the needs of the Czechs. They really got a build up from 1918 to 1938, not only at home but also abroad by Beneš's propaganda machinery. The sorry part of it for them was that they had begun to believe the "stories." When the first grave crisis appeared and their great Beneš

chose to resign and flee, the Czechs even forgot they had a well-equipped army and the Škoda works. They were soon broken even morally.

The rapid disintegration within the Republic encouraged the Germans to go ahead with their plans of aggression. Beneš's "Island of Democracy" collapsed without offering the slightest physical resistance to the Nazis. The Czechs were not taught by Masaryk and Beneš to fight for freedom and democracy, but only to be the "ruling nation," whereas the other nations of the Republic could not see why they should fight for a system and a state that had exploited and mistreated them.

III

SLOVAK POLITICS AFTER MUNICH

Under such circumstances, there remained for the nations comprising Czecho-Slovakia nothing else to do but accept the consequences of that given situation and to work in their own interests to save whatever could be saved. In reality the politics of Prague, and to a certain extent even that of Slovak leaders, changed after Munich. In the foreign field Prague informed Moscow that it no longer regarded the Russo-Czecho-Slovak agreement as valid. The Little Entente finished in the same fashion and great changes took place also in internal politics.

Slovakia and her political factors, however, acted in a positive manner toward the state and the Czech nation even after Munich. After a 20-year fight with Prague centralism, after innumerable injustices perpetrated against the Slovak Nation, the existence of which they even denied, the Slovaks did not say "Goodbye!" to Prague, but only demanded the fulfillment of the Pittsburgh Pact, on the basis of which they had entered into the single state with the Czech nation in 1918.

The demands — formulated in the Žilina Manifesto, signed by the representatives of all political parties in Slovakia, excepting the Communist and Social Democratic parties — in no way exceeded the framework of the Pittsburgh Pact, nay not even the obligations of Dr. Beneš during the Peace Conference, where he proclaimed: "It is the intention of the Czecho-Slovak Government to organize the state by accepting as the basis of national rights the principles applied in the constitution of the Swiss Republic, that is, to make of the Czecho-Slovak Republic a second Switzerland. . . ." — D. H. Miller, MY DIARY, pg. 69).

Finally, even the motion for the autonomy of Slovakia — passed November 18, 1938, by the Prague Parliament by a vote of 144—25 — did not go so far as Dr. Beneš had assured the Peace Conference and noted the adhesion of the Slovaks to the Czecho-Slovak Republic.

In attaining autonomy Slovakia saw the realization of its twenty-year struggle and the removal of the causes that had placed it in opposition not only to Prague, but had also dug a chasm between the Czechs and the Slovaks. "The old Czecho-Slovakia," said Dr. Martin Sokol in Parliament on the day Slovak autonomy became law, "in no small measure fell also because there was no agreement and sincere cooperation between the Slovak and Czech nations. If we wish the

new, smaller Czecho-Slovakia to be healthy and capable of life, we must build it not only with new methods, but also with a new spirit of mutual, fraternal understanding."

At the session of Parliament on December 14, 1938, Dr. Nicholas Pružinský said among other things: "We have faith in the new Government because of objective reasons, too. We have here before our eyes the fulfillment of the legal demands of Slovakia. To the Government that stands back of the autonomy of Slovakia belongs the trust of the Slovaks and Slovakia."

The Slovaks voted unanimously for the successor of Dr. E. Beneš, Dr. Emil Hácha, on November 30, 1938, as they had voted for Dr. Beneš in 1935, on the basis of the promises given.

From the expressions of their representatives it is plainly evident that the Slovaks wanted a new, healthy Czecho-Slovakia, hoped for a mutual, fraternal understanding with the Czechs and expressed their confidence in the government which backed the autonomy of Slovakia, but only to such a government and as long as it backed that autonomy.

But the Czechs, it seems, regretted granting autonomy to Slovakia after they had recovered from the first shock of Munich. They were exceedingly sorry that they had "given" the Slovaks what rightfully was theirs and began to plot against the autonomy of Slovakia. They sought legal and illegal means of circumventing the law that gave Slovakia autonomy. Czech political leaders were determined again to prove that Slovakia was not able to live an autonomous life. "At the same time they acted systematically to squeeze Slovakia against the wall economically and financially." (Dr. Ďurčanský: POHL'AD na slovenskú politickú minulosť, pg. 218).

As a result of this policy of Czech representatives and after considering the international situation, more and more voices began to cry out against such autonomy. The first to protest was Dr. V. Tuka, who, after serving 9 years of a 15-year term given him by a Czech court for "treason," never became reconciled with Prague. Dr. Tuka, a university professor was sentenced without sufficient proof, with the aid of false witnesses and only on indictments. When the verdict was pronounced in 1929, Dr. Tuka said: "On this verdict shall be laid the foundations of the Slovak state for a hundred and hundred future years." It was the same Dr. Tuka who previously (in 1924) had proclaimed that Slovakia was mature for independence.

In their contacts with the Third Reich, especially with its economic representatives, Slovak representatives learned early in 1939 that the Germans were preparing for new political deals with their Magyar allies against the Czecho-Slovak Republic in the spring. About the middle of February one of the foremost factors of the Third Reich, Dr. Vehnsmayer notified several Slovak political representatives that Hungary wants to occupy the territory of Slovakia on March 15, and indicated that an eventual proclamation of the independence of Slovakia could forestall this action.

In the meantime, Czech leaders "were unbelievably shortsighted and haughty in their treatment of the Slovaks," as Sir Neville Henderson wrote ("Failure of a Mission," pg. 232). The Prague government went so far as to ask Berlin how German circles would regard military intervention in Slovakia. Berlin answered that such action was entirely an internal affair of Czecho-Slovakia. Encouraged

by Berlin, the Czechs prepared to liquidate Slovak autonomy. And on March 10th, writes Henderson, "the Czech president deposed the Slovak Prime Minister, Dr. Tiso, from his office and occupied Bratislava with the Czech army and gendarmery and by force installed a new government there."

The story, however, is not complete without stating the fact that Slovak soldiers were disarmed and put under guard in barracks, the military commissioner of the Slovak government was deprived of his function, 300—400 outstanding Slovak men were arrested at night and taken into Moravia and university students also were disarmed and incarcerated, etc.

This act of the Prague Government was the coup re grace for the Czecho-Slovak Republic that suffered in agony since Munich. This was too favorable an opportunity to be missed by Hitler's opportunism; disregarding the consequences, he decided to pull the right plan out of his brief-case and act with lightning speed, Henderson writes and adds: "My warning ambassador Mastný that his Government (that is the Prague Government) was playing into the hands of Hitler and that its foolhardiness would end in catastrophe fell upon deaf ears. . . . The Czech Government persevered in its stubbornness. . . . (Opus cit., pg. 233).

If any other nation were confronted with a situation such as the Slovaks were faced with in 1939, how would it have acted? And what did the Slovaks do?

This sounds like an irony of fate, but they did only what Dr. Beneš considered as correct in 1936 when he told Count C. Sforza, the Italian statesman: ". . . I would turn to Berlin and accept any compromise I could to preserve the independence of my country. . . . (Vd ILLUSIONS ET RÉALITÉS de L'EUROPE, Fribourg, 1944). Nay, while Dr. Beneš wanted to do that willingly, the Czechs forced the Slovaks into the situation and made Hitler call Msgr. Dr. Joseph Tiso to Berlin on March 13, 1939. — (S. N., 1949).

* * * *

WHO SAID IT?: — Masaryk on Collaboration With USSR. — Broadcasting to Czechoslovakia, on November 8, Jan Masaryk congratulated the Soviet people on their anniversary. He said that the Russian revolution produced a new type of state. War was necessary to convince the world that there could be no peace without the Soviet Union. Therefore, collaboration with the Soviet Union will be sought. The Soviet Union having no imperialistic aims, Stalin has again stressed the independence of other States. Czechoslovakia fears nothing because her traditional characteristics of democracy and progress are respected by Russia, with whom Czechoslovakia will collaborate on an equal basis. The Soviet Union accepts the friendship of the Slav nations, respects their independence, and seeks the collaboration of Britain and the United States for peace. The Soviet-Czechoslovak Treaty, protecting Czechoslovakia from German aggression, guarantees our internal freedom and State independence, Masaryk concluded." — (News Flashes From Czechoslovakia, Chicago, Ill., November 27, 1944).

AMERICAN SLOVAKS AND SLOVAK STATEHOOD

CONSTANTINE ČULEN

(Member of the Board of the Slovak National Council Abroad)

We are witnesses of an incredible phenomenon. The demand of the Slovak nation to decide for itself its own fate, to have its own state, has often been classified as a crime. If it is a crime, then we must state clearly at the outset that the roots of this crime stem not in Slovakia, but in America.

No other country in the world has had as much influence as America on the development of the political destinies of the Slovak nation. Even today in Slovakia there live several hundred thousand mature citizens who spent the best years of their lives in America. English and American prisoners of war attest to the fact that wherever they traveled in Slovakia they found people who could speak English and felt a burning love for the United States.

There were times when 2 per cent of the total Slovak population left its native home for America annually. In the years between 1889 and 1915 about 600,000 Slovaks emigrated out of a total population of about 2,750,000. Of course, many Slovaks later returned to their homes beneath the majestic Tatras, but the majority of Slovak emigrants remained in America. Today about a million and a half Americans are of Slovak descent. The Slovaks who returned to Slovakia, however, were not the same people who had left it. They were distinctly different in certain respects, because America had done something to them, America had, in fact, transformed them.

In old Hungary the Slovak people was an oppressed nation. The Slovaks were dying materially and nationally under the yoke of Magyar feudalism. They had very little or no schooling and no representation in parliament. Their language was not tolerated outside the church and family circle. It was such Slovaks who first came to America in large numbers. They had no idea of the rights they were entitled to. In America they began to organize themselves on a national basis.

It may seem strange, but it is a fact that the Slovaks as a whole did not awaken nationally at home, but in America. For the first time in their history, it was in America that the Slovaks could parade freely under the Slovak flag. In America they could establish Slovak organizations. In America they could freely and without fear of censorship and confiscation publish their own Slovak newspapers. They could freely and without interference present their political demands. All this was forbidden them at home, in Slovakia.

In a short time, this small nation, oppressed at home, awakened nationally on American soil and soon made its influence felt even at home. In Slovakia under the Magyars, the Slovaks could not even elect a squire, but in the USA they could elect even the President of the USA after they had become citizens. The Slovaks, who lived in thralldom in their native land, became full-fledged citizens in America. And since thousands of Slovaks returned to Slovakia from America annually, they brought with themselves not only money, with which they paid off their debts, bought homes and established businesses, but they also brought with themselves national consciousness. The

influence of these re-emigrants was so effective that the Slovak nation, which had only two deputies in parliament during a whole century, already had twenty of them during the first decade of this century. All political battles of the twentieth century were waged with American money and were influenced by the American spirit of freedom.

From America, the Slovaks brought many things to their homeland, especially, however, 1. capital; 2. technical experiences; 3. human and national self-consciousness; 4. a love for democracy; 5. a knowledge of English; and 6. a love for America and the American way of life.

What the Slovaks brought from America they sought to validate at home. The American way of life encouraged and directed their plans in Slovakia. Slovak life waxed strong even during the hardest times, because it was nourished materially and ideologically by a current of material and spiritual wealth from America.

In the recent past, American Slovaks formed the most nationalistic group of the Slovak nation. What the Slovak at home could not say, the Slovak in America expressed for him. It is undoubtedly an interesting reality that the wide Slovak masses became ardent nationalists in America. And the fact that Slovak newspapers became an indispensable necessity of the Slovak people, that, too, must be credited to America.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the most widely distributed Slovak newspaper in America had about ten times more subscribers than all the Slovak newspapers in Slovakia combined. Without the national consciousness which the emigrants brought home from America, there never would have been any political awakening of the Slovaks during the first decade of this century. And without the money, which the Slovaks earned and saved in America, the living standard of the Slovak people would not have attained the high level that it did. For that reason, the idea of "the new homeland of the Slovaks" — in reference to America — is not an empty expression. America actually became the new homeland of Slovak emigrants, in fact, the homeland of approximately one-third of the entire Slovak nation.

The Slovaks at home always mentioned and still do mention America with grateful affection. In Slovakia, even today the words Pittsburgh, Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland, New York, Milwaukee, Scranton and other American cities with large Slovak populations are as familiar as Budapest, Berlin, Vienna, Paris and Prague.

If one looks through the oldest newspapers published in Slovakia, he will ascertain that Slovakia regarded the results of American democracy with great admiration and respect long before hundreds of thousands of Slovaks settled in America. American freedom was their model.

The old "Prešpurské Noviny" (Pressburg News) already in 1783 published quite a few articles about the American struggle for freedom. And American democracy — "where there are no citizens with special privileges" — was offered as a model to the Slovaks by Štúr's "Orol Tatranský" (The Eagle of the Tatras). The youthful followers of Štúr already in 1843 contributed an article about Slovak poetry to the "North American Review." Joseph Miloslav Hurban, Slovak patriot, said in his biography of Štúr:

"Wise and just laws, founded on inalienable natural rights, will provide strength and welfare to nations. For us the evident proof of this has become the free United States of North America."

His son, Svetozár Hurban Vajanský, renowned Slovak poet and writer, sent a greeting to his countrymen in America while in jail. In that greeting, among other things, he has America saying to Slovak emigrants:

"Oh, come to me, foresaken children!
Gifts I have not, but one thing I do give you:
Time to work in freedom, respect for human rights."

And he further wrote:

"And Columbia? Thou hast rent the shackles,
Lifted them up closer to humanity, to God, to heaven.
Land of Christopher, may Christ reward thee,
For what thou hast done for my wretched brethren."

That the American flag was held in great respect by the first Slovak immigrants is attested to by a leaflet that was published some fifty years ago. It reads:

"Under this flag you are a free citizen.
Under this flag there is freedom, equality and fraternity.
Under this flag is justice and truth.
Under this flag you have meat and bread.
Under this flag you worship no one and are not persecuted by the Government.
Under this flag you were received as a human being and freedom was given you.
Under this flag you praise the Lord in your own tongue and no one ridicules or persecutes you for it.
To this flag you have sworn loyalty, you have become a citizen.
Do you want to break your oath, do you want to be a perjurer and traitor?!"

That is how the Slovaks regarded and respected the American flag fifty years ago. In such a manner the Slovaks rallied around the American flag and everything that is symbolized: American democracy, American regard for the rights of nations. It was the American way of life that first motivated the Slovaks to fight for the right of the Slovak nation to its own state.

Unfortunately, false and mendacious propaganda succeeded in convincing the statesmen of America that there is only one nation in the world that did not want freedom and independence — and that nation was the Slovak nation. They fell for the story that there was one nation in this world that wanted to be a vassal of others and not an independent nation, and that was the Slovak nation — the nation which drank from the pure stream of American freedom and democracy, the nation which so long ago propagated from America what its enslaved adherents at home dared to translate into deeds a half century later.

American democracy and the American way of life gave the Slovaks the first motive to demand all their inherent rights. Fifty years ago American Slovaks propagated and financed the fight of their nation for the right of a general, equal and secret ballot in Slovakia.

The Slovaks in America sent their first "Memorandum" to the rulers of Slovakia in 1900. In it they requested the Magyar government to grant the Slovaks at home as much freedom as the Slovaks enjoyed in America.

Peter Rovnianek, one of the outstanding Slovaks of his time, already in 1894 wrote in the first Slovak Almanac (*Kalendár*) published in America:

"American-Slovak life is shining proof of Slovak capability. Only in America have we seen all that the Slovaks would be able to create at home, if the boot of the tyrant would not press them to the earth."

But even Dr. Edward Beneš himself wrote in 1918:

"American Slovaks are manifesting how the entire Slovak nation would think, speak and act, if it could freely think, speak and act. They are demonstrating on what level of moral and cultural development they would be today, if they could live their own national life for at least two or three decades." — (*ČESKOSLOVENSKÁ SAMO-STATNOST*, September 4, 1918).

The idea of Slovak statehood did not originate in Germany, as is frequently claimed, but in America.

The first Slovak book which told the Slovaks why they must work for their own state was published in Pittsburgh, Pa., some forty years ago. It is altogether understandable and natural that the Slovaks, who grew up under the sun of American freedom, should demand for the nation they are descended from all that had proved to be so sound in America. For that very reason it was the American Slovaks who first came with the idea of Slovak statehood, and it is they who even today in an overwhelming majority hold to the idea that only an independent Slovakia can fully secure the national existence of the Slovak nation.

The Slovak state originated from the ideals of American freedom. Its most zealous defenders are people who know and love America. The spirit of independence has its roots in America. The first Slovaks who claimed that the Slovak nation was entitled to a state of its own lived in America. The Slovaks, brought up in America in the spirit of freedom, were the first to foster the idea of Slovak state independence.

It is tragic misunderstanding, caused by bolshevik and Czech propaganda connected with bolshevism, that from the large states it was only the American statesmen who did not recognize the Slovak State, even though that State ideologically and practically had its roots in the great and noble principles of American freedom and democracy and was born, so to speak, on American soil.

Already at the outset we had mentioned that the Slovak, who at home could not elect even a squire, in America could elect the President when he became a citizen. No little wonder, then, that such a difference in political rights evoked in the common Slovak immigrant a sound reaction and urged him to think about the causes for such a difference.

How is it — he asked himself — that here in America I can do these things, but at home I cannot? He learned that in a foreign land he could freely establish societies, schools, church organizations and businesses; that he even could march under the Slovak flag; that

he could pin the Slovak emblem on his coat. But all these things were taboo at home, why?

He compared himself with members of other nations and asked: What's wrong with me? Am I inferior to others? Am I not a member of the family of nations of this earth? Is my child more backward intellectually than others in school? — And again he had to answer: certainly not! He saw that the Slovak, given an equal opportunity, was equal to any member of the ancient and wealthy nations as far as work, dexterity and readiness were concerned. Why can't the Slovaks at home enjoy the things the Slovaks can have in America? Who are we? What is our history? And so it was that the Slovaks gradually became self-conscious and it was altogether natural for them to seek the same rights and opportunities even for their own people over there.

Thus it was that some 50 years ago, there began to appear in the American Slovak press the declaration: Slovaks, we are entitled to our own Slovak State!

In the "Amerikánsko Slovenské Noviny" (American Slovak News), the "Slovenský Denník" (Slovak Daily), the "Jednota" (Union), the "Slovák v Amerike" (Slovak in America) and the "Slovenský Hlásnik" (Slovak Herald) — to name at least the most important papers — an interesting discussion developed. Dissertation followed dissertation and thoughts were being crystallized. Among the first propagators of the idea of an independent Slovak State was Adalbert Tholt-Veľkoštiavnický. Then came Hušek, Salva and many others.

And it was entirely natural that those people saw the industry, the organizing ability of the Slovak in America who was aroused nationally and secured materially. They saw that in the Slovak nation were to be found all the prerequisites for the attainment of the highest right — state independence.

At the same time, when the Slovaks at home dreamed about having a single secondary school and about the re-established Slovak Institute (Matica Slovenská) as the pinnacle of national attainment, the voice of the Slovaks in America thundered: Not one school, but all schools! Not a few rights, but all rights! Not the easement of thralldom, but the abolition of slavery! And these things are possible only in an independent state life. At the time, when even those Slovaks at home did not believe in their hearts the Slovak credo which they publicly professed, the voice of the Slovaks in America boomed:

"You must believe in the resurrection of our Slovak nation and also in its complete independence and self-sufficiency, because the Lord of all nations is not God of the dead nations, but of those which are corporeally and spiritually alive. Long live the independent Slovak nation!" — (Slovenský Denník, Pittsburgh, Pa., April 10, 1909).

That was the kind of faith that transformed mountains and cured the sick. But that kind of faith could be attained only in an atmosphere enlightened by the sun of American freedom and democracy. And we must admit that this faith, developed in America, worked miracles in Slovakia. The Magyars could prohibit the publication of Slovak periodicals, they could forbid the entry of Slovak Almanacs into Slovakia, but the living bearers of this faith kept returning home to fire their countrymen with it. Without this faith there would have been no miraculous turn of events in 1918. And it was this faith, too, that in an instant washed away all foreign deposits like fine dust.

INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC

DR. JOSEPH KIRSCHBAUM

Because of years of relentless propaganda by Czech emigrés and the renewal of the Czechoslovak Republic by the merits of the Soviet Union, the origin of the Slovak Republic and its incorporation into the European organization is often placed in a bad light even by persons and nations who a priori do not have an unfavorable opinion of the Slovak efforts for independence. In the interest of the truth, it will not be amiss to answer the question of how European public opinion and the governments of European states received the proclamation of Slovak independence.

The question is all the more significant when we consider that changes of the map of Europe are not and never were indifferent to the European nations and especially to the great powers, and that the Slovak Republic was proclaimed in a period of peace. European nations, therefore, had an unhindered opportunity of taking a stand to the newly established State and that in a two-fold manner:

1. By not recognizing the new State and refusing to establish diplomatic contacts with the Slovak Republic.

2. All States, and especially those which guaranteed the independence and integrity of the Czechoslovak Republic after Munich, had the opportunity, by peaceful means or by war, of making the existence of the Slovak State impossible and renewing the old state of affairs.

What happened in the case of Slovakia?

There was not a single state in Europe or elsewhere which did that in 1939. There was no protest against the origin of the State of Slovakia even from some of the great powers that were in some way obligated to Czechoslovakia. But there were protests only against the occupation of Bohemia and Moravia by the Germans. Even President Roosevelt, answering Dr. Beneš's telegram (March 16, 1939), wrote in his letter March 27, 1939, that "even though the Government of the United States is aware that the lands of Bohemia and Moravia were occupied by the German military forces and are now factually under German authority, it has not recognized this situation as a legal condition." (Beneš: *Memoirs*, 1947).

As far as Slovakia was concerned, practically every European State recognized Slovakia and established diplomatic contacts with it. England and Soviet Russia not excepted. Just about two months after the proclamation of Slovakia's independence the Foreign Minister of Great Britain ordered the following note delivered to the first Foreign Minister of the Slovak Republic:

Bratislava, May 4th, 1939.

Your Excellency:

On the instruction of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs I have the honour to inform you that His Majesty's Government in

the United Kingdom propose to appoint me as Consul for Slovakia with residence in Bratislava.

Pending preparation of my Commission I have the honour to request provisional recognition by the Slovak Government of myself as His Majesty's Consul for Slovakia.

I avail myself of this opportunity to express to your Excellency the assurance of my highest consideration.

PARES, M. P., H. M. Consul.

The Slovaks in turn sent Ing. Harminc as General Consul to London to represent the Slovak Republic. The exchange of diplomatic representatives between London and Bratislava was prevented only by war which broke out six months after the proclamation of Slovak independence.

Soviet Russia, which did not enter the war against Germany on September 1, 1939, set up one of the largest embassies in Bratislava, and the first Russian ambassador, G. Puškin, upon presenting his credentials to the President of the Slovak Republic, Dr. Joseph Tiso, said among other things:

"Presenting to you the documents which accredit me as Extraordinary Ambassador and Minister Plenipotentiary, appointed by the Presidency of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, I can announce to you with joy that the nations of the Soviet Union have taken cognizance of the establishment of diplomatic contacts between the Soviet Union and the Slovak Republic with deep satisfaction. Because of the war in Europe the establishment of these contacts oversteps the framework of mutual interests of both our states."

Before Moscow sent its ambassador to Bratislava, however, the Soviet Government had notified the diplomatic representative of the Czechoslovak Republic, Dr. Zdenek Fierlinger, that it no longer regards him as a diplomatic character. Fierlinger himself wrote about this as follows:

"On December 14, I was called to the Foreign Commissariat by Mr. Barkov, the Chief of the Protocol. Barkov told me that the Soviet Government regrets that it can no longer acknowledge my diplomatic character. He added that I could remain in Moscow with my officials and their families as a private individual."

Barkov, according to Fierlinger, even "refused to mediate a visit with the Commissar of Foreign Affairs" as he had also refused to send any written report for the Commissariat or any other official person. So it was only by a private letter that Fierlinger could write to the representative of Foreign Affairs: "I understand fully the stand taken by your Government and I am grateful for the permission to remain in Moscow as a private individual." (Z. Fierlinger: "Ve službách ČSR," Prague, 1947, pgs. 313—314).

Pre-war France readily recognized the new State in the heart of Europe, but formal diplomatic contacts could not be established, because war had broken out. In the case of France, which recognized the Slovak Republic *de facto* on July 14, 1939, and *de jure* on April 25, 1942, an interesting detail has been noted. While the French Foreign Minister, M. Dalladier, refused to see Dr. Beneš and negotiate with him, the French General Consul in Bratislava

was trying to convince the Slovak Government that an exchange of ambassadors had not taken place immediately after March 14, 1939, only because of the previous relationship between France and Czechoslovakia. The reasons concerned prestige. However, he considered an exchange of ambassadors in the near future as a self-evident matter. As the General Secretary of the Hlinka Slovak People's Party, even I had acted personally as mediator between Dalladier and the Slovak Government. Beneš referred to the incident in his MEMOIRS:

"Dalladier — when I asked for an audience — refused to see me and refused to discuss any political matters with me. Later he brought this matter up before the Government and supported his action with reasons for doing so." (Beneš: MEMOIRS, 1947, pg. 139).

Germany and Italy also recognized Slovakia. The Slovak Republic was recognized by all great powers which were deciding the fate of Europe. It was recognized even by the Vatican. The western powers, who got into the conflict against Germany in September 1939, did not change their stand toward Slovakia even after the war began, but only several years later (1942—1943). The decision of the western powers, of course, had no influence on the actual or legal existence of the Slovak State as far as international law was concerned. For that reason the Vatican and the other neutral States did not change their relationship with Slovakia during the entire war-time period.

The neighbors of Slovakia likewise did not oppose her independent status. Poland recognized Slovakia March 16, 1939, and Hungary on March 15, 1939. And this is especially significant in the light of the conditions and tendencies which appeared in central Europe after the break-up of Austria-Hungary. The changes effected by the proclamation of Slovak independence concerned, in the first place, the neighbors of Slovakia from the economic and strategic point of view. By its historical development, its position and natural resources the central European area has its own laws, needs and demands. The individual nations of that area jealously watch so that no single nation among them might grow at the expense of the others and so disturb the natural balance of military and economic forces.

The Slovak Republic, however, fitted into this area not as a disturbing element, but, conversely, as a fulfillment of conditions of balance and the removal of one of the significant causes of instability of the Centro-European organization. That is why even Yugoslavia and Rumania, which until 1938 together with the Czechoslovak Republic within the framework of the Little Entente had been the pillars of the post-war organization in the Danube basin, made regular diplomatic contacts and collaborated economically with the Slovak Republic soon after it was established. Bulgaria did likewise.

Among the neutral States, besides the Vatican, which recognized the Slovak State and made diplomatic and economic contacts with it were Switzerland and Sweden. Spain, which had declared itself neutral later, recognized Slovakia on May 4, 1939, and sent its ambassador to Slovakia forthwith. Belgium accorded *de facto* recognition to Slovakia.

Other European States, thus far not mentioned, which recognized Slovakia were: Finland, Denmark, Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, and Croatia. And States outside of Europe: Japan, Manchuria, China (Nanking), Siam, Costa Rica, and Ecuador.

Slovakia, then, was recognized by a total of 27 countries: by great powers and small powers, by neutral States and by powers of both warring camps. It is interesting to note that the majority of the States which granted recognition to Slovakia as an independent State was on the side of Anglo-Russian coalition. The claim that Slovakia was recognized only by Germany and its satellites is, therefore, a willful deception of the international public. Seventeen of the 27 States recognizing Slovakia fought against Germany or were neutral.

This comparison is significant not only because it uproots the falsehoods of the propaganda which presented Slovakia to the Allies as a State recognized only by Germany and its satellites, but because it also confirms — as has been shown — that European States without exception recognized the right of the Slovaks to an independent existence, an independent State. Furthermore, it also confirms the fact that these European States did not see anything unnatural or disturbing in the establishment of independent Slovakia, even though they did see it in the occupation of Bohemia and Moravia. In this connection it is interesting to note how the League of Nations regarded the collapse of Czechoslovakia. In his MEMOIRS, Beneš himself complained that the General Secretary, J. Avenol, refused to place his protest before the League of Nations for official discussion with the argument that the protest was not placed before the body the regular way, but my a "private individual." (Pg. 109).

The fact that no European States protested against the existence of the independent State of Slovakia is important, especially when we consider that Central Europe was the way out of two World Wars and that its organization after World War I made a powder keg out of this area, the explosion of which was feared for twenty years.

From the Slovak standpoint this recognition of the Slovak Republic by such a large number of States has the significance that the Slovaks can always point to it when demanding Slovak independence. And it is important to remember, too, that the Slovak Republic was proclaimed six months before the start of World War II which at the outset divided the nations of the world into two camps. This fact and the fact that Slovakia was placed into the German-Italian sphere because of her geographical position, prevented many other nations from recognizing her diplomatically, nations which undoubtedly would have recognized her under more favorable conditions. Considering the spontaneity and speed with which the individual States responded to the notification of the proclamation of Slovak independence and arranged diplomatic or consular offices in Bratislava, it can be correctly assumed that the Slovak Republic would have been recognized universally if the war had been delayed only a year or two.

Slovakia, then, was accepted into the family of independent nations not only by central European States, but also by the great European powers. European, and especially Central European interests, correctly comprehended, could not, of course, permit the denial

of this right to one of the oldest Central European nations, when this right today is acknowledged even to colonial nations and without the validation of which there can hardly be any sensible talk about justice or even a guaranteed peace.

II

The recognition of the Slovak Republic by such a large number of European and non-European States, despite the tense international situation, was in a great measure the merit of the young Slovak diplomacy. In order to have a complete picture of the international position of the Slovak Republic, it would be well to list not only the States which recognized Slovakia and established regular diplomatic relations with her, but also the individuals who represented the Slovak nation in the international forum and point out the tendencies represented by the first Slovak diplomats. And, of course, it is also necessary to mention the countries which did not recognize the Slovak State.

As a result of the international recognition of the Slovak Republic, the Slovak flag — so ignored and trampled upon previously — for the first time in Slovak history waved proudly over the Slovak diplomatic and consular offices in the capitols of almost every European State. In eternal Rome, as well as in Moscow; in the proud city of Albion, as well as in Berlin; in Warsaw, Belgrade, Sophia, Bucharest, Budapest, Berne, and Stockholm; in Helsinki, Vienna and even over the general consulate in Prague. And in all these places, the Slovak emblem hung independently for the first time: it was not attached to the emblem of St. Stephen's Crown, nor to the Czech Lion.

For those who harbor a respect for the symbols of nations, this reality can hardly be a sentimental one only. It has its own deep political and moral meaning. We can evidence this fact best from the time that the Slovak flag had to be hauled down temporarily.

As far as the diplomatic representatives of the Slovak Republic are concerned, not all were trained for the task, because in the Czechoslovak Republic out of 1246 officials in the Foreign Service only 33 were Slovak, and only a few of these were diplomats. However, in the Slovak nature there are certain talents for this kind of service, so that even in this field much of what the past did not allow to be done was caught up with shortly.

Altogether there were three categories among Slovak diplomatic representatives in leading positions: Six former officials from Prague (Dr. Ivan Milecz, Dr. Joseph Cieker, Dr. Joseph Mikuš, Dr. Pišsko, Dr. Radlinský and Dr. Szatmáry); three from internal politics (Karol Sidor, Matthew Černák and Dr. Joseph Kirschbaum); and the others came from various professions (Francis Tiso, Dr. Spišiak, Dr. J. Šimko, Dr. Zvrškovec, Tido J. Gašpar, Dr. Galvánec, Dr. Bečko, etc). The majority of these, therefore were men who had prepared for other tasks in life. But even large states, which have a sufficient number of diplomatic personnel, place persons of other professions in leading diplomatic positions.

Keeping in mind the tense situation of the world at that time and the reality that Slovakia was practically unknown in foreign lands and was consistently being presented in a bad light by anti-

Slovak propaganda, we must admit that the tasks facing the diplomatic representatives of the newly established Slovak Republic were by no means easy. And yet, the Slovak diplomatic representatives — excepting Dr. Szatmáry — defended the right of the Slovak nation to its own State to the end and performed their tasks well in the diplomatic, cultural and propaganda fields.

There was one task they had, however, failed to do, and that one was probably the most important one: they did not prepare for the transfer of Slovakia to the side of the Allies at the right time. However, it is a bit premature to pass judgment in this matter in view of the world situation and the present position of Slovakia, and especially in view of the fact that all Slovak diplomatic representatives in neutral countries, upon whom this task fell, have not as yet been heard from. For the present we can make several general remarks and logical conclusions which emanate from the over-all situation existing at the end of the war and from the tendencies that made themselves apparent with the Allies in general, and in the relation to Slovakia in particular. And from this, then, we can learn what alternatives presented themselves to the Slovaks.

After considering all the circumstances under which the war was waged and those under which the so-called "National Uprising" in Slovakia was organized later, this problem looks decidedly different than it appeared to be at first sight. But aside from the fact that diplomacy always only prepares the way for the policies of a government and is in itself only an executive organ, no other nation had to contend with such impediments as the Slovak nation in the matter of transferring to the Allies. Let us consider only one:

When the Anglo-Saxon Allies (in 1941—1942) and the Soviet Union (1943) came out for the renewal of the Czechoslovak Republic and even concluded agreements with the Government of Dr. Beneš, the joining of the Slovak Government and the Slovak diplomats with the Allies would have meant the acceptance of Czechoslovakia — already recognized by the Allies — and the renouncing of independence. Slovak political leaders at home and Slovak diplomats abroad had to decide the dilemma: Either to remain loyal to the right to independence and defend it to the end even at the cost of great personal sacrifices, or to join those who did not recognize the right of the Slovak nation to its own State and thus secure for themselves definite personal interests.

That is how the problem looked when the "Slovak Revolt" broke out in August 1944. While the Italians, Rumanians, Magyars and Bulgarians joined the Allies to safeguard their independence, the leaders of the rebellion in Slovakia were proclaiming the annexation of Slovakia to the Czech lands, renewing the Czechoslovak Republic and ridding their own nation of its independent State.

The position of Slovakia in the war and, therefore, even the actions of Slovak diplomats, were determined in the over-all framework by the policy of the Allies themselves and in the narrower framework by the aims of the "rebellion" in Slovakia.

If it were not for this situation, there would have been among the Slovak politicians, as well as among the Slovak diplomats, representatives in the individual states of Europe who would have had the political and moral legitimacy to speak in the name of the Slo-

vak nation. In the Vatican, one of the most important centers of world diplomacy, Slovakia was represented by Karol Sidor, whose anti-German stand cannot be disputed. The General Secretary of the Hlinka Slovak People's Party, ousted from his office by Nazi pressure, was sent to Switzerland to represent Slovakia. In Sweden Slovakia had the career diplomat, Dr. Pissko, and in Spain Dr. Mi-kuš and Dr. Cieker, both of whom were not only first-class diplomats, but were outstanding in their generation.

It is evident, then, that the Slovak Republic did have people in important places abroad who were predetermined to prepare the transfer of the Slovaks to the victorious camp. And undoubtedly it shall once become known that these Slovak representatives did not lack the initiative, either. But there were no real possibilities for such a policy, if the Slovaks themselves were not to surrender their right to independence. This they could not do, because they knew that the rights which were taken away by force could always be regained, but the rights which a nation once surrendered could never be regained.

A policy that redeems apparent, temporary advantages by surrendering natural rights never did end up well. And conversely, history was wont to reward with victory the fight which had an up-right aim. Whether the Slovak Government and the Slovak diplomats did right by consistently holding to their anti-communist stand and defending the inalienable rights of their nation, history and probably even the near future shall render a definite verdict. That they acted honorably and did not pursue their personal interests is already clear today.

III

Dr. Edward Beneš and his followers always denied the individuality of the Slovak nation and were always opposed to Slovak autonomy. This group of Czech politicians and several individuals of Slovak origin, who subscribed to the ideology of a "Czechoslovak nation," stubbornly refused to recognize the right of the Slovaks to their own State and the acceptance of the Slovak Republic into the international community. They used all means at their disposal to misrepresent the Slovak question before the Allies to effect the destruction of the Slovak Republic and force its annexation to the Czech lands.

Dr. Edward Beneš even attempted to deceive the Vatican, but did not fare so well. In a Memorandum, sent to the Holy See on May 12, 1943, through President Roosevelt, Dr. Edward Beneš stated among other things: "The Slovak people, in its great majority, today stands without any reservations behind the present Czechoslovak Government. In Slovakia political, social, economical and moral conditions are extremely sad. The majority of the Slovak people considers the present regime in Bratislava responsible for this situation and as a traitor of the Slovak people and the Czechoslovak Republic. Former governmental Slovak parties (the Agrarians, Liberals, Socialists) are almost completely behind the Czechoslovak Government and against the present regime in Slovakia, while the former Catholic People's Party, which took over the rule of Slovak affairs from the hands of the Germans in 1939, today stands — according to our reports — at least 60 per cent against the present regime." (Beneš: MEMOIRS, Documents).

Of course, the Vatican knew what the actual situation in Slovakia was. The Slovak Government was represented at the Vatican, and the Holy See had its representative in Bratislava. Beneš was fully aware of that fact, but he thought he might persuade the Holy See to see things his way, since it was pretty evident at that time that he would be back in the driver's seat when the war ended. The Vatican's refusal to recognize him and his London Government made Beneš furious.

Because of the war situation and the fact that Slovakia fell into the Axis bloc because of its geographical position, the actions of Dr. Beneš and the Czech Slovaks (Czechoslovaks) was more successful than that of the Magyars after World War I who also tried to mobilize world opinion for the return of Slovakia to the Magyar State. The Magyar action was also supported by several renegade politicians of Slovak descent and yet it failed because the Slovak nation was determined to live its own life. History itself tells us that it is only logical for every nation to strive for an independent State. The temporary victory of Dr. Beneš will not reverse the logic of history. The Slovaks firmly believe that in the end their natural rights to an independent State shall be recognized, as they have been recognized in the case of other nations. It is only a question of time and an appropriate international situation.

If the revisionistic efforts of Dr. Beneš seem to have found a greater response in Slovakia than Magyar revision, that certainly cannot be considered as proof that the Slovak nation in its entirety, or even in its greater part, has renounced its right to an independent State.

The Slovak nation was not given the opportunity to say whether it wants to live in its own State or in a common State with the Czechs. The Slovaks who accepted the Czechoslovak solution did so out of fear emanating from the fate of a vanquished State, under the pressure of military events, and in the endeavor to assure themselves of an advantageous position to rule over Slovakia with the help of the Czechs, because they had no chance of getting into leading positions any other way. That this solution was accepted even by the small group only out of opportunism is attested to by the fact that already toward the end of 1943, when the outcome of the war was known, this group went into action for the renewal of the Czechoslovak Republic, stressing at the same time that the renewed State would be a federation and the question of the individuality of the Slovak nation was a reality which would not be debated.

The Czechoslovak Republic, therefore, was forced on the Slovak nation not only by the opportunism of a negligible minority of the Slovak nation which followed its own egotistic aims and served Czech imperialism, but also by the international situation. On such foundations, however, no State can exist permanently and must perish unconditionally when the causes and circumstances responsible for its existence disappear.

And so, just as the recognition of the conception of Dr. Beneš by the western powers had a fatal influence on the politics of the Slovak Republic during the war, just so the fact that the Slovak Republic was incorporated in the Czechoslovak Republic without

regard for the will of the Slovak nation and without regard for the proclamation of the Atlantic Charter and the Charter of the United Nations has its influence on the stand of the Slovaks in the contemporary world struggle.

If the Allies would have promised to preserve Slovak independence, as they did in the case of the Italians, Magyars, Rumanians, Bulgarians, Finns and Austrians — who also fought on the side of the Axis — then it would have been possible to expect that the Slovaks, too, would have found their place at the right time on their side. None of the aforementioned peoples lost their independent States or were forced to become members of other States, but the Slovak State was annexed to Bohemia—Moravia.

It is, therefore, self-evident that the Slovak nation considers the present condition as an occupation and together with its emigration is fighting simultaneously for the victory of democracy over communism and the liberation of the Slovak Republic from Soviet-Czech occupation.

WHO SAID IT?

"We shall be eternally grateful to those who helped us, above all our great Slav brother, the SOVIET UNION. This gratitude, however, must not permit us into believing all is won because we have so powerful an ally. We must arrange our lives in such a way that we may never become a burden to those who are bound to us by alliance of friendship. On the contrary our friends must be made to feel that they have gained a loyal and effective ally worthy of such an alliance." — (Jaroslav Štránsky, Minister of Justice, Mass meeting in Most, June 19, 1945).

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"Personally I trust the Russians; they think as they speak. I believe that they will cooperate fully with England and America. They will hold strictly to the decisions of the Teheran Conference to guarantee the peace for several generations. I do not believe that Russia will interfere in the internal affairs of its neighbors. I assure you that Stalin is willing to confirm his statement that he is completely against all efforts to force communistic principles on the Danubian countries." — (Dr. Benes, Interview with Charles Goley, London "DAILY EXPRESS," 3-13-44).

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"Our position in Europe is different from that in 1918. Today we are approaching far-reaching revolution. Our whole world is changing. This war has formed a solid and impregnable bloc of Slav nations and states. Today there is the RED ARMY, the army of Marshall TITO, brave Polish divisions and the Czechoslovak PEOPLE'S army, and if all those forces are put together we shall have SOME SAY in Europe." — (Zdenek Nejedlý, Minister of Education, Address to Physical Training Societies, Prague, May 31, 1945).

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The belief that Czechoslovakia is a part of Russia or that the Russians are DICTATING to us is not true. And you don't find a Russian soldier in our whole country." — Stanislav Novak, Czech Consul, CLEVELAND PRESS, 8-19-46).

THE SLOVAKS HAVE A RIGHT TO A STATE

CONSTANTINE ČULEN

Why? Because —

1. It is their natural and God-given right.
2. The Slovaks have a historical right to their own state.
3. They never relinquished that right.
4. The Slovaks never abandoned their state and let another nation inhabit it.

5. Nationally they have matured to such a degree that they feel they not only have the right, but even the solemn duty to take over their destiny into their own hands.

6. They want to be an equal member in the family of nations.

7. What the Slovaks want does not constitute an injustice to others, because they do not want what belongs to others, but only what they are rightfully entitled to.

8. The Slovaks are not willing to have their necks in a foreign yoke.

9. The Slovaks have definitely proven that they know how to manage their own state on a European level. They can do that better than was done in their name, without their consent, and on their territory by the Magyars or the Czechs.

10. Everybody that ruled over the Slovaks is trying to prove that the Slovaks cost them money. The Slovaks, during the years of their statehood (1939—1945), have definitely proven that no one need lose money on Slovakia. It is, therefore, in the interest of the economic progress not only of Slovakia but even that of the nations who ruled over the Slovaks to have the Slovaks rule themselves. The Slovaks do not want any country to suffer economically because of them, since — as the Czechs and Magyars say — they are not worth it.

11. Finally the Slovaks want only what has been acclaimed by all great nations on earth — freedom and independence — for which all nations — large and small — fought for twice within a quarter of a century. That is the will of the Slovak nation. That is its supreme aim.

Did the Slovaks enjoy the rights of a free nation in Hungary?

Definitely not!

Did they enjoy the rights of a free nation in the Czecho-Slovak Republic?

Absolutely not!

For the first time since the tragic end of the first Slovak State over a thousand years ago the Slovaks definitely ran their own internal affairs in the independent State of Slovakia (1939—1945). The head of the State was Slovak and the overwhelming majority of those employed by the state were Slovaks. The Slovak language was the official language of the state and the language of the schools. Since the fall of the first Slovak State, it was the first time that the Slovaks had Slovak schools, a Slovak army, a Slovak parliament, a Slovak government, a Slovak president, Slovak money, a Slovak emblem and a Slovak flag. It was also the first time that Slovakia appeared as an independent State on the map of the world.

The Slovaks fared better even during the last war than they had at any time during the past 1000 years. They managed their own household and loved it. Their homes really became their castles. They breathed and lived as free men, even though forced into war and all its hardships.

Whosoever denies the Slovaks the right to their own way of life, — to freedom, independence and statehood denies the law of God and nature and betrays the ideals of true democracy.

* * * *

RED TRAITORS

(h) — We have pointed to the danger of Communism for many years in our paper. We have also cautioned the gentlemen in Washington about this enemy of human freedom and dignity. It is not our fault if some of the gentlemen preferred to listen to Beneš and his underlings and paid no attention to American citizens.

We have, however, saved many of our countrymen, whom the Reds wanted to ensnare with nice and enticing mottos. We can say, therefore, that the Slovaks kept away from Communism. They did not want to have anything to do with it.

But such was not the case with the so-called "Czechoslovaks." When the professional revolutionists could not gain the Slovaks, they became friendly with Communists and paved the way for them to get to Washington.

It is to the credit of American Slovaks that they did not play second fiddle to the Communists, that they did not collaborate with them and that they did not allow them among themselves.

The Czechoslovaks, however, are designated as collaborators with Communism. The NEW YORKSKÝ DENNÍK (New York Daily) and the Czech NEW YORKSKÉ LISTY (New York News) even imported communist editors. And they even published many, many articles of communist writers. This they cannot deny, because it is all perpetuated black on white. These journals were no better than the communist LUDOVÉ NOVINY (People's News) or the Canadian LUDOVÉ ZVESTI (People's Tidings).

Today it is difficult to distinguish between a Communist and a Czechoslovak, because both are so closely united. Both walked along the same road, both spoke and wrote the same things. Both villified the Slovaks, because they exposed their dirty plans. Even Washington is finally noting whence the wind is blowing.

The aim of the Communists is clear, because it was stated by Stalin in simple words. Twenty-two years ago Stalin told us who was an internationalist. He said: "An internationalist is a person who unconditionally, without hesitation and without limitation is willing to defend the USSR, because the USSR (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) is the foundation of the world revolutionary movement, and to defend this movement, make it progress is not possible without the protection of the USSR. Who would defend the world revolutionary movement without and against the USSR, that person goes against the revolution, that person necessarily falls into the camp of the enemies of the revolution."

It is not long ago that the LUDOVÝ DENNÍK (today the shrunken LUDOVÉ NOVINY) wrote: "We are internationalists." And Stalin explained what internationalists are. That means that Communists must defend and work for Russia even against the interests of their own country.

In the past several months several of these loyal servants of Moscow, who betrayed our atomic secrets, were apprehended in America. Just recently Julius Rosenberg was arrested. Before he was taken, Harry Gold, David Greenglass and Alfred Slack had been apprehended.

There are more of the same kind of communist scamps around. Not every one had the opportunity to betray, but every one of them is loyal to Moscow. If the opportunity presents itself, they will sabotage, strike, and probably even murder. The Communists form the internal Fifth Column which is more dangerous than an armed, open enemy. These Fifth-Columnists conceal themselves and work like thieves and gangsters.

We must be on our guard against these evil-doers, especially now. It is the duty of every citizen to report all Communists to the FBI. The latter will then see to it that these internal enemies are properly investigated. — (SLOVENSKÁ OBRANA, Scranton, Pa., 7-25-50).

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WHO SAID IT?

"Dr. Beneš never faltered. . . . He was party to no scheme to divide the natural enemies of fascist aggression. Dr. Beneš stood with his people. He stood and he stands today for right to govern themselves and to make democratic social progress." — (Congressman Hugh De Lacy, THE SLAVONIC MONTHLY, Sept. 1945).

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"CZECH COMMUNISTS ARE FRIENDS OF THE USA — All members of the Communist Party in Prestice, a town in southern Bohemia, became members of the society "Friends of the United States." — (HLASATEL, Chicago, Ill., 6-13-47).

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"We know that without Russia's friendship none of her small neighbors can revert to independent national life. In negotiating the treaty we have just signed, I DID NOT SELL OUT TO RUSSIA. We intend to live our own life in our own way and WE KNOW THAT RUSSIA WILL RESPECT OUR WAY OF LIVING. . . . You and we are going to continue our policy of collaboration, friendship, confidence in and good faith towards Soviet Russia. I am never going to undertake anything — and neither are you — which could be in any way against the interests of the vitally necessary collaboration." — (Jan Masaryk, Dinner speech, Russian War Relief, Inc., NEW YORK TIMES, 12-21-43).

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"There is definitely no iron curtain in Czechoslovakia. Foreign correspondents are free to travel about the country and write as they please, and the people are not afraid to voice their opinions. The CZECHS are a hard-working people and POLITICALLY AND ECONOMICALLY THEY ARE MAKING A SPLENDID RECOVERY." — (Laurence A. Steinhardt, NEW YORK TIMES, 2-1-47).

"CZECHOSLOVAK" DEMOCRACY

(SP) — No one in the world boasted as much about "people's democracy" as the Czechs and Slovak Czechs (the so-called "Czechoslovaks"). The Soviet fraud with people's democracy seemed to be made to order according to the pattern of Zenkl, Beneš, Lettrich and others of the same political camp. They identified themselves with this idea right after the war, because it expressed their stand toward the people, politics and the management of the state. The idea represented them; they were people's democrats before Soviet propaganda discovered the expression "people's democracy"!

How else can we explain what happened after an insignificant camarilla, placed at the helm of the ship of state with the aid of foreigners and really drunk with power, proclaimed a "people's democracy" and its immense advantages? All we have to do is take the newspapers and parliament records from 1945—1948 and we'll see that the Czechoslovaks used every occasion to publicly praise the "people's democracy." Western powers could find a lot of interesting material there about the "democratic" sentiment of the people who today are going from door to door in Washington and London claiming they are martyrs to the cause of democracy.

Czechoslovakism (Czech imperialism) was the historic vanguard and predecessor of "people's democracy." Today we all know that "people's democracy" is a denial of democracy and signifies a political police system which prohibits free expression of an opinion and demands of all an unconditional acceptance of the ideas and platforms of the ruling caste. "People's democracy" outrages the opinion of the majority and forces it to adapt itself to the minority; it is brutal in the means it uses to force assent with its ideas and program.

The Czechoslovaks were people's democrats already during the first Czecho-Slovak republic: because the Slovaks wanted to be free they persecuted them with ruthless police methods; they did not respect the opinion of the vast majority of the Slovaks and forced the whole Slovak nation to live in political, economical and cultural subjection; as good "people's democrats" they introduced in Slovakia methods of economic exploitation and by artificial means kept the whole of Slovakia in a miserable social position; they were forcing the Slovak nation to regard Czecho-Slovakia as its home at a time when they were making that state a prison for Slovaks. Of course, that did not work out as planned.

It was not strange at all that Czechoslovak circles accepted "people's democracy" with enthusiasm in 1945. That kind of democracy helped them to occupy Slovakia. In Slovakia it gave them the power: 1. to murder, dispossess, disfranchise and exile all political opponents; 2. to persecute Slovak patriotism as "fascist"; 3. to abolish democratic freedoms and install a government of suppression and terror; 4. to suppress every free expression in Slovakia and persecute every effort of the Slovaks to free themselves from a situation forced on them; 5. to establish concentration camps and present the Slovaks, fighting for the freedom of their nation, as fascists and enemies of democracy; and, 6. to falsify the actual conditions prevailing in Slovakia.

After their departure from the so-called "people's democracy" of

Czecho-Slovakia, these "superdemocrats" continued in the work they were taught to do by Beneš. They are still propagating the lie that the Slovaks do not want their own state, but prefer Czechoslovakia; they are vilifying the Slovaks and telling the west that the Slovaks are backward culturally, economically and politically and lacking in democratic traditions. The Slovaks, according to them, are possessed by psychic complexes of an inferior mass.

According to the Czechoslovaks it is democratic to have the Slovaks

1. the Czechs have the right to rule Slovakia;
2. Slovakia must be again annexed to Czech lands, because Czech interests — which is to them the supreme measure of democracy — demands it;
3. whatever harms Czech imperialism in its relationship to Slovakia is undemocratic, non-progressive and reactionary.

According to the Czechoslovaks it is democratic to have the Slovaks live under Czech rule and accept the Czech concept that the Slovaks do not exist, that politically the Slovak nation is immature and incapable, and that it should let itself be led on a leash which the Czechs thrust around its neck out of "love" and for "protection."

According to the "people's democrats" it would be utterly undemocratic to grant the Slovaks the right of self-determination, the right to their own state, the right to decide their own fate, and the right to live in their own fashion according to their own means. These enemies of the Slovak nation know that the Slovaks are almost to a man for an independent Slovak state, so they sound the alarm that the renewal of the Slovak Republic would be a threat to democracy. They are determined to carry on their propaganda of lies to deceive the western democracies just as Beneš had done so effectively for some 30 years.

But the Slovaks are determined, too — especially now more than ever before — to expose and fight the Czechoslovak pseudodemocrats. The Slovak nation rid itself of the Magyar cancer and it shall, with the help of God, also rid itself of the Czechoslovak ulcer. The western powers are gradually beginning to realize that Zenkl, Papánek, Ripka, Lettrich and company are masked enemies of democracies and are, in fact, responsible in a large measure for the conditions prevailing in Czechoslovakia today. And also, the world must soon realize that Czechoslovakism was the handmaid of Communism and, as such, the enemy of true democracy.

* * * *

WHO SAID IT?

"Czechoslovakia was **THE ONLY COUNTRY** in Europe that had a high consistent leadership of such men as Masaryk and Benes. . . . Czechoslovakia could not trust the countries which betrayed her, Britain and France. She was compelled to cast her lot under the overpowering might of Russia. But I am not at all alarmed at the prospect. The Anglo-Saxon countries will always stand for **LIBERTY AND LOYALTY** to the principles of religion. They always fail, however, in the matter of economic justice and racial brotherhood. **RUSSIA STANDS ALWAYS FOR THESE TWO THINGS.** I believe that Czechoslovakia will play a large part in helping to keep Russia loyal to the Charter of the United Nations." — (Dr. Sherwood Eddy, **THE SLAVONIC MONTHLY**, Sept. 1945).

THE CZECHOSLOVAKS AND ANTI-SEMITISM

(JK) — The Czechoslovaks (Czech Slovaks) apparently are getting a bit jittery. While the democratic peoples gradually are finding out the truth about Czecho-Slovakia and its former leaders, who talked democracy but collaborated with Stalin and the Czech Reds, the so-called "Czechoslovaks" are sweating in a desperate attempt to smear all freedom-loving, patriotic Slovaks.

Take the NEW YORKSKÝ DENNÍK ("Czechoslovak daily published in Slovak language"!), for example. For the lack of better arguments it has threatened to expose the Slovak patriots — who always fought against Communism and for the inherent and God-given rights of their people to freedom and independence — as anti-Semites. For the Czechoslovaks, there are no exceptions: all Slovaks, who believe their nation has a right to be free and independent, are collectively and totally supposed to be anti-Semites.

For those who are familiar with the Slovak question, such an accusation is just a plain lie. But while we are on the question of anti-Semitism, let's look at the record of leading Czechoslovaks and see how these recently born "superdemocrats" (People's Democrats) stood on the Jewish question in Slovakia.

The Czechoslovaks usually get up in the morning and go to bed at night with the name of T. G. Masaryk on their lips. What he taught, what he wrote and what he said, that for them is like the Gospel.

Well, how did T. G. Masaryk, the so-called "founder" of the Czecho-Slovak Republic, regard the Jews?

Dr. Vavro Šrobár wrote a book in 1946. He was one of Masaryk's most loyal servants in Slovakia and one of the leaders of the so-called "glorious Slovak national rebellion" (1944), during which the Slovak public for the first time found out that so many of the present "eminent" Czechoslovaks existed. The book, published in Prague, is called "Z môjho života" (From My Life). Masaryk — the teacher, the model and ideologist of the Czechoslovaks — according to the book: "reproached the Jews, because in a Christian world they did not know how to free themselves from the Old Testament, the Talmud and the Ghetto. They are isolating themselves from all the subjugated nations and are siding, according to religious precept, with the ruling nations; and in our country that means they are Germanizing and Magyarizing."

And the teacher and model of Lettrich, Papanek, Slávik and other Slovak renegades continued in this manner: "The Jews of the ghetto are alien to us with their faith, their lives, their views, philosophy and sociology; they are isolating themselves so, that we do not understand them, we fear them and do not like them" (pg. 245).

Masaryk, according to Šrobár, "acknowledged that the fight against Jewish greed, usury and materialism, against their alliance with our enemies, is justified, especially in Moravia and Slovakia, where in the villages they have become the ruin of the naive, gullible people. Here the privileges of the tavern trades should be taken away from them, or there should be a law passed which would protect the people against the temptation of alcoholism and against Jewish usury" (op. cit. pg. 246).

And in like manner argued all the "salon anti-Semites." The so-called vulgar anti-Semites realized these salon views only later on. Šrobár himself admits in his book that when "the farmers came to my office to ask me to talk, on such occasions we used to talk politics and I spared neither offices nor the government, not even the Jews" (pg. 383). For Šrobár the Jews were the same red cloth as Magyar offices in government. And that is quite a strong word! And the so-called Czechoslovaks (Czech Slovaks!) in exile negotiated with such an anti-Semite during the "revolution" and even after it!

But T. G. Masaryk and Vavro Šrobár were not the only Czechoslovaks who felt that way about the Israelites in Slovakia. Dr. Joseph Lettrich, Vice-President of the Council of Free Czechoslovakia and former Chairman of both the Slovak National Council and the so-called Democratic Party of Slovakia, felt like that about the Jews, too.

In 1945—1946, by Presidential decrees the Magyars and the Germans in Czechoslovakia were robbed not only of their civil rights, but also of their entire wealth. Naturally, their properties were confiscated without compensation. The fate of the Magyars and Germans was in no manner enviable: they were placed outside the law, hunted like wild beasts and delivered to the ridicule and brutality of the new "People's democratic" administration. Decent people anywhere could not want such a fate to overtake even their worst enemy.

At that time Dr. Joseph Lettrich, as president of the Slovak National Council, demanded that the Jews be dealt with in the same manner as the Germans and Magyars. In 1945, he proclaimed:

"We must endeavor to drive out of our country without mercy the Magyars and Germans. The Jews, who by their sentiments and their language show sympathy to the Germans or Magyars, we shall regard those Jews as Germans and Magyars and they will have to suffer the fate of Germans and Magyars."

The pettifoggery of Mr. Lettrich was perfidious: the great majority of Jews in Slovakia, as a result of the training of previous regimes, used German and Magyar as their languages in their homes and businesses. The greatest part of the Jews in Slovakia has traditional sympathies for the culture and way of life of the Magyars and the Germans. According to Lettrich's statement in 1945, the overwhelming majority of the Jews had to be driven out of Slovakia. Is it any wonder, then, that some zealous partners of Lettrich saw in this proclamation directives on how "to get rid of the Jews"?

Actually in 1945—1946, one could often read in the foreign press about "anti-Semitic deeds in Slovakia." In reality nothing else was happening except that the mentioned directives of Lettrich were being applied by his zealous followers. However, since such expressions were unpleasant to the regime, they simply blamed all of this on Slovak "fascists."

It is significant that not one of the leading politicians of that regime in Slovakia — who are now in emigration organized in the Council of Free Czechoslovakia — did not consider it necessary to protest against this anti-Semitic explosion of Mr. Lettrich. And there are among them even such people who not only were not his partisans, but were also his competitors in seeking and gaining for themselves the favor of the Prague governments.

Since the "NEW YORKSKÝ DENNÍK (New York Daily) seems to be the organ of the Czechoslovaks, maybe some of his people could offer a plausible explanation for Lettrich's statement. Or did they agree in the innermost parts of their souls with Lettrich? They were participants of power and every political child recognizes the principle: Silence means agreement.

Before the 1946 elections Lettrich's political campaigners did not hesitate to use anti-Semitic slogans just to gain votes for Lettrich. For example in the Žilina district, Lettrich's men scattered leaflets that were titled: "Only Jews and dogs vote for Communists." In Lipiany Lettrich's district secretariate issued a flyer entitled: "Death to the Jews!" In Hrabkov his followers issued leaflets that began with the words: "We want Slovakia without the Jews." Similar anti-Semitic slogans were used by Lettrich's followers in many other Slovak towns and villages.

It is strange that Dr. Lettrich never publicly condemned such utterances and slogans of the election battle even though the Slovak press pointed to them several times. And it is interesting that even other so-called politicians of that regime — and here we are not thinking of some of the present servants of the New Yorkský Denník, (such as Beharka, Blaho and others) — did not utter a single word of protest against the use of anti-Semitic instincts in the pre-election campaign of 1946. — (J—9-6-50).

WHO SAID IT?

"I have looked with a great deal of satisfaction upon the accomplishments of President Benes and the people of Czechoslovakia should be congratulated in having such a resourceful, capable and loyal citizen, who has CONSENTED to continue in service. . . . Under his leadership the country attained a reputation for SOLIDARITY and achieved success UNEQUALLED by any other FREE nation." — (Congressman Adolph J. Sabath, THE SLAVONIC MONTHLY, September 1945).

"I never deamed that little country (Czecho-Slovakia) would fall into the clutches of the Communists. The CZECHS always looked to Russia. . . . Russia was the ONLY country trying to save them from Hitler at Munich. . . . When the Russian army drove out the Nazis and Benes was able to return, the country was in a serious condition. The Germans had looted and destroyed. Benes did EVERYTHING possible, but some people were still dissatisfied. The Communists took advantage and promised they could do better. They made false promises." — (Representative Adolph Sabath, THE WASHINGTON POST, 3-14-48).

"Dr. Hubert Ripka, Czechoslovak Minister of Foreign Trade, told a farewell press conference here (London) today that he did not consider the Western Allies' apprehensions that his country MIGHT BECOME A VASSAL OF THE SOVIET UNION were grounded. . . . He said it was natural that Czechoslovakia should seek her security primarily in friendship with the Soviet Union. . . ." — (NEW YORK TIMES, 4-15-45).

CZECH CAPITULATION TO COMMUNISM

The ease with which the communists came into absolute power in Prague, with the assent of Dr. Beneš and the participation of Jan Masaryk, surprised even many informed people in Europe and the western world. Much had been written about the political maturity of the Czech nation, its loyalty to democracy and western culture and, therefore, many were willing to believe that Prague actually was a bastion of western democracy. Some expected that it would be a bridge between the East and the West. Others thought that the Czechs were called to perform an important mission in the contemporary tense situation of the world.

But before the people of America and Europe had a chance to rub their eyes after reading the reports about the crisis in Prague, the bubble about the loyalty of the Czechs to democracy and the story of their world mission burst. The Communists had no trouble at all in taking Prague. There was not a single person in the entire state of this "mature, democratic nation" to offer any noticeable resistance to the communist putsch.

History had repeated itself. Ten years before there was not a single Czech who dared to defend the independence of the Czech nation and Beneš's "democratic" state by firing even a single shot at the nazis.

In the Czech nation there could not be found a Petkov or a Maniu, and much less a Tiso, who preferred the gallows to negotiating with communism and serving the communists.

And this fact probably stunned the western world more than it did the people of central Europe, because the people of the former were really taken in by Beneš's high-gear'd propaganda machine. The European and American public was suddenly faced with the fact that Dr. Beneš not only did not offer any resistance to the communist minority, but that he even gave the communist putsch a legal form and a democratic appearance. And it was the same Dr. Edward Beneš who had published the book "Democracy Today and Tomorrow," wherein he portrayed himself as a pillar of European democracy! Another well-known representative of "Czech democracy," Jan Masaryk, even accepted a position in the "people's democratic government" of the Russian gauleiter, Klement Gottwald.

The former French Foreign Minister, Georges Bidault, compared what happened with such lightning speed in Prague in 1948 with what happened in 1938 in Munich, when Dr. Edward Beneš, his government and the whole Czech nation accepted without resistance the factual surrender of the Czechoslovak Republic to Hitler.

As far as the role of Dr. Beneš is concerned, there is without debate a great similarity between his politics of 1938 and 1948. And especially the results were similar.

In 1938, Dr. Beneš not only surrendered unconstitutionally a piece of Czechoslovak territory to Germany, but also advised to make concessions to the Germans, when threatened by his own people and refusing to collaborate with Hitler he fled to England. And so it was even in 1945, when unconstitutionally he surrendered Ruthenia to Moscow and made concessions to bolshevism.

But this time, if we do not want to talk about the cleverness of Moscow, fate wanted Dr. Beneš to play the role of Dr. Hácha, who in the spring of 1939 had to accept the German protectorate and sanction the end of the Czechoslovak Republic after Beneš had fled. Today practically no one doubts that Dr. Beneš formally surrendered Bohemia and Slovakia into the hands of Moscow and bolshevism when he surrendered the Government into the hands of Gottwald and the Czech communists.

And Beneš did that without offering any resistance. He did not even attempt to defend freedom, democracy and Christian traditions.

There is in all this a bit of tragedy as far as the Czech nation and even Beneš himself are concerned. But it was the logical consequence of the Czech politics of Dr. Beneš. Even the most clever fraud and most deceitful player cannot get away all the time with his frauds and deception. A time comes when he gets caught and rapped. And so it is even in politics.

Dr. Edward Beneš and a great part of the Czech politicians based their internal and foreign policies on intrigues on the assumption that they could deceive their partner. T. G. Masaryk himself wrote about this in his better years in "The Czech Problem," saying: "If one looks at our public life a bit carefully, he shall see not only weak beggary, but he shall also meet up with a particular type of intriguers. Intriguery is poisoning our entire allied life, because people who cannot be lions are becoming foxes, and those who cannot be heroes are becoming lackeys and are helping themselves by means of lackey intrigue. And the ideal of these numerous people is 'politics'."

Dr. Beneš was a prototype of such a "politician." This is not the opinion of Slovaks only. Lloyd George said as much in his book "The Truth About the Peace Treaties" which he published in 1938:

"Of the many misfortunes that befell Austria in the day of her great calamity, one of the worst was that Czecho-Slovakia was represented at the Peace Conference not by her wise leader, President Masaryk but by an impulsive, clever but much less sagacious and more short-sighted politician, who did not foresee that the more he grasped, the less could he retain."

Today it would be undoubtedly in place to remark that Beneš's policy was a great calamity not only for Austria, but also for the so-called "Third" Czechoslovak Republic.

Dr. Edward Beneš always had a plan. To make certain that he would rule over Slovakia, the Sudeteners and German property, he flew to Moscow already in 1943 to negotiate a pact with Russia. Of course, on the assumption that later on he could circumvent it and break it — as he had done in the case of the Pittsburgh Pact in 1918, at the Peace Conference in 1918 when he promised that Czechoslovakia would be a confederation, and in other instances as well.

Moscow, however, was wise to Dr. Beneš. The little man with a plan seemed to forget that he was dealing with the master in the art of deception and broken pacts. And so it was that Dr. Beneš, because of his extreme ambition and imperialistic tendencies, brought the Czech nation to the brink of disaster twice within a decade.

But this time the catastrophic consequences of his politics affect not only the Czech nation, but his capitulation to bolshevism has an

immeasurable significance for the whole of Europe, and already today is fatal for the Slovak nation which today is without the services of Dr. Tiso to save it from bolshevism, as he once saved it from nazism. A handful of communists had little trouble in overpowering Slovakia and subjecting it to its totalitarian dictatorship only because they had the support of Prague — the same Prague that had previously ordered to kill, jail and deport the elite of the Slovak nation and placed morally irresponsible and politically immature puppets in charge of Slovakia.

The Slovaks shall never forget the terrible and wanton destruction of Slovak lives and property caused by the 1944 rebellion which was planned by Beneš and his followers and executed by the so-called Czechoslovaks (Czech Slovaks!) and the communists.

If proper steps are not taken in time, the results of the Czech capitulation to bolshevism shall be just as immeasurable for Europe. Czechoslovakia now is in fact a hive of communism and a most important air base of Moscow. Bohemia and Slovakia have great strategic significance even though military techniques have changed. And more so today than ever before, because Europe from the Czech borders to the West is ruined, defenseless and disorganized. Bismarck's "who rules Bohemia, rules Europe" did not lose its significance completely.

Of course some one could say — and Beneš's political followers in exile are repeating it almost incessantly — that the Czech capitulation to bolshevism was caused by the over-all world situation. We still remember that Czech propaganda tried to convince the world after 1938 that the West had betrayed Czechoslovakia, even though that country did nothing to save itself.

But the song of bankrupt Czech politicians "we had to capitulate" sounds a bit off key today. We have had time to consider what Beneš and his followers had done, written and said since 1938. We know that the Beneš government rejected the Marshall Plan and that his representative in the United Nations, Jan Papanek, always voted as the USSR delegate did. It's all a matter of record.

In his message to the Provisional National Assembly, October 28, 1945, Dr. Beneš said: "We are the allies of the Soviet Union and shall remain faithful to that alliance... and we shall pursue sincerely the new Slav policy."

DNEŠEK (Today), Dr. Beneš's periodical, wrote on July 17, 1947: "The fundamental pillar of our foreign policy is our allied agreement of friendship and mutual assistance with the Soviet Union of December 12, 1943. In that year we had decided to adhere to the East. And, therefore, even if the present economic war should become so acute that we would not be able to get even one wagon of cotton from the West, we shall still remain loyal to the East."

And Jan Masaryk, talking about his Moscow trip (Marshall Plan), told a correspondent of the London DAILY MAIL: "Any talk of threats or an ultimatum against Czecho-Slovakia is silly. We made a decision which I cannot but consider the right one under the circumstances."

Sapienti sat!

THE POLITICS OF HLINKA'S PARTY IN THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC

(Jk) — On October 6, 1938, representatives of all SLOVAK political parties and branches of all CZECH political parties — excepting the Communist and the Social Democratic parties — met in Žilina, Slovakia. There it was agreed to accept the program of Hlinka's Slovak People's Party (HSPP).

The same representatives met in Bratislava on November 8, 1938, and, in the national interest, decided to unite all political forces in a single party under the name of the Party of National Unity (PNU). No coercion of any kind was used to bring about this accomplishment. The representatives of all Slovak and Czech parties were happy that representatives of the victorious autonomistic movement did not resort to reprisals, but gave all of them a chance to take part in the political life of Slovakia.

Autonomy of Slovakia was the political program of Hlinka's Slovak People's Party and Rázus's Slovak National Party (SNP) exclusively. National interest and internal and foreign political developments led the representatives of Slovak autonomy to unite all political parties in Slovakia in the Party of National Unity. After a twenty-year fight, Prague was forced to grant Slovakia autonomy and, so, to capitulate in the matter of the fiction of a united "Czechoslovak" nation (ethnically speaking). All political parties in Slovakia — excepting the parties of Andrew Hlinka and Martin Rázus — also capitulated by joining the Party of National Unity, because they had stood centralism and did not recognize the existence of the Slovak nation.

Unity was not forced on any political party, as was later claimed by the enemies of the Slovak Republic. We repeat: all political parties of Slovakia realized that it was in the national interest to unite all political forces in 1938 and, therefore, joined the Party of National Unity voluntarily.

The news that this feat was accomplished was joyously acclaimed by the whole of Slovakia. At that time, Dr. Joseph Tiso wrote in the "SLOVÁK":

"The Slovak nation has become united in the spirit of Bernolák and Štúr, in the spirit of Moyses and Kuzmány, and in the spirit of Hlinka and Rázus. Class distinctions have ceased and we now have only the united Slovak nation."

Representatives of other political parties (naturally, excluding the Communists and Social Democrats, whose parties were dissolved) thought, spoke and wrote along the same lines. The Executive Committee of the Slovak National Party, assembled at Žilina, December 15, 1938, issued a proclamation in which it said:

"The adherents of the Slovak National Party recognize the necessity of uniting all Slovaks in one political party and wholeheartedly offer to work for the welfare and happiness of the whole nation. We are convinced that this unity shall evoke in all Slovaks — at home and abroad — the greatest joy and satisfaction. Long live the united Slovak nation!"

In its Christmas message, published in the NATIONAL NEWS, the SNP spoke even more clearly and forcefully:

"Political reconciliation has come to our nation. We have decided to build our new future in the field of politics united on a national program. This fact was received with joy by the Slovak public, because in these uncertain times it assures the most reliable and safest way to save our national individuality and its validation to the fullest extent in public life."

The message was undersigned by. Dr. Emil Stodola, Dr. Ján Paulíny-Toth, Dr. Miloš Vančo, prof. Vladimír Černák, Senior Otto Škroviná, Senior L'udovít Šenšel, Ing. Štefan Kada, and Dr. Martin Kvetko.

Not only political circles felt the need for political unity and joyously welcomed it when it was realized, but literary and cultural circles as well. One needs only to refer to the journals and newspapers of that time to convince himself of that fact. Irregardless of political affiliation or creed the vast majority of the Slovak nation approved political unity. Naturally, there were a few dissenters in the Services of Czech imperialism who could not see any possibility of playing a leading role in the new Slovak life. But even these did not make themselves heard at that time; in the new formulation of Slovak political life they did not see "the succession of fascism and the death of democracy" and they did not defend their "democratic" convictions.

Such was the political atmosphere to March 1939. In March 1939 national unity was a bit shaken when the Czech army occupied Bratislava and some political leaders of former Czech political parties again offered their services to Czech imperialism and joined with it. But the shock was of very short duration and did not bring any changes in the political life of Slovakia, because the representatives of Czechoslovakism did not know how to fight for their convictions. They always served the regime in power and, acted accordingly even after the proclamation of the independent Slovak Republic.

Naturally, the prestige of Hlinka's party only increased with these events, because not only Slovak autonomy, but even the Slovak State was, above all, the result of the fight of HSPP and its leadership. The Party's 20-year struggle against Czech efforts to assimilate the Slovaks nationally and gain political and economic control of Slovakia — aided only by Rázus's Slovak National Party — led to the autonomy of Slovakia and then, by the law of evolution and logic, to independence. The Slovak State was the result of the organized will of the Slovak nation. While others were deaf to the pulse of the times and based their politics on fiction, Hlinka's Slovak People's Party — springing ideologically from the Slovak earth and the heart of the Slovak nation, set out on the road that led to political and state independence. (Vd. Tiso, SLOVÁK — No. 32, 1941, and Kirschbaum, NÁSTUP — No. 19, 1939).

It was only natural, then, that HSPP remained at the head of political life even in the Slovak Republic, especially since there were no other political parties when independence was proclaimed and no serious attempts were made to create them. The Magyars and the Germans, as national minorities, had their own political parties, so that from the beginning to the end of the Slovak Republic there were three parties that were protected by the Constitution and duly rep-

resented in Parliament by their own representatives. Even the small minority of the Ukrainian-speaking population had its own representatives within the fold of the HSPP.

After the proclamation of independence of Slovakia, Hlinka's Slovak People's Party — the opposition party that had fought for Slovak autonomy up to October 1938 — suddenly became the ruling party, the Government, and almost exclusively became responsible for the building of the State and for the fate of the Slovak nation. After the revolution it still retained the name of the Party of National Unity.

Up to 1938 HSPP had few paid workers in its ranks; most of the work was done voluntarily by zealous, untiring young Slovak patriots fired with the idea of freedom and independence. After March 14, 1939, the leaders of the HSPP were confronted with the arduous task of setting up the State administration to serve the political, economic and social needs of the Slovak Republic. The task was entrusted to the younger intelligentsia of the HSPP that had proven its loyalty in the struggle for independence and worked selflessly and courageously in the interest of the Slovak people. This accession of younger people into high functions in the political and state life of Slovakia was, however, a general phenomenon. It was necessitated by the fact that the older members of the HSPP were in government and parliament positions, the diplomatic corps, etc.

Into the organization apparatus were taken young representatives of the other civic parties that existed before 1939. Along with outstanding workers of the HSPP, there were in responsible positions also adherents of the former parties of Hodža, Rázus, the National Democratic Party, nay, even workers with social-democratic tendencies. They were not only in the Central Committee, but in the branch organizations also.

But even under the conditions and events that had been caused by the revolution of March 1939, the ideology and the program of the HSPP did not have to undergo any changes. The Party's program in the past followed the interests of the Slovak nation, stood on the Christian and social principles both in the spiritual and material regard, and defended the president of the Party, could rightfully say even in the Slovak Republic:

"Here we stand with our ideology, with which we have for centuries long struggled in the past, so that we might keep going and organizing under the great motto: For God and Nation. Therefore: No declination from our old ideology, because we would then deviate from the root. The building of the Government and State shall go along with the same party, based on the very same program that has led us in the past so that by our political and structural activity we might lead the nation along the lines that would safeguard its future. We need not bring into the nation values and ideals of foreign origin, but we must develop our old spirit" (SLOVAK, 1940, No. 189).

The stand of the younger generation was clearly formulated on the eve of the first meeting of the Party which took place October 1, 1939. In the "NÁSTUP" (Accession), No. 19, 1939, we find the following:

"It is our good fortune that the basic principles of our ideology, which had led our Party in the struggle, need not be altered even now after victory. After adding to the organizational structure of

the Party, it will be necessary only to give form to this ideology and apply it to every phase of our state and national life. We were true to ourselves in the struggle and we shall remain true to ourselves also in work. This healthy realism, which has told us to come out of the nation and turn all attention and work to its welfare, must be the characteristic symbol of every act of our politics even now."

Just as the president of the Party, so the younger generation in the leadership of the Party stressed that foreign models need not be imitated. When Dr. Joseph Kirschbaum became the General Secretary of the HSPP, he said:

"In these changing times we shall have to organize our Party in such a way so that it could safeguard the interests of the Slovak nation under any political changes — internal or foreign. The Party will, therefore, have to develop according to given, political Slovak relations, working and organization premises, such as prevail in Slovakia, and it shall have to suffice for our national character. No kind of senseless copying could help us, if we did not have any psychic and factual premises for so doing" (NÁSTUP — April 1, 1939).

Naturally, the roles of the Party in Slovakia increased. It became "the only bearer of the political will of the nation" and was supposed to be "the connecting link of all those forces that are partaking in the political and economic building of the state" ("SLOVÁK," No. 98, 1939). The Party became "the oil and the brains in the state apparatus, the bearer of political consciousness; it provided the program and became the foundation of State authority" (SLOVÁK, No. 99, 1940).

What kind of program did the Party give the nation?

Here are several noteworthy points:

"For labor we want a social justice which reconciles our wage policy. We want to validate it for the remaining ranks of the nation for the whole working class of Slovak people, especially for the agronomists. The farmers certainly deserve to have their patriotic patience of past years respected and that increased attention be given their needs.

"Our tradesmen and businessmen shall be insured against old age, invalidity or unemployment. A healthy undertaking and an adequate wage must be our guide for regulating employer-employee relationships."

Furthermore, the Party demanded "a true management of public monies, increased wages for the lower categories to a measure that would enable the establishment and upkeep of a family and do away with official graft and corruption."

To improve the living standard of the Slovak people, the Party demanded regulatory and meliorative projects, the harnessing of water power and the electrification of industrial, trade and agricultural projects, bolstering and building up of domestic industry, of homes, various schools, etc. (SLOVÁK, No. 13, 1941). In a word, it did just about everything to convince the people that it can fare well economically, socially and culturally only in a state of its own, one in which the nation itself manages its own affairs.

The HSPP endeavored to do all this for the nation as a whole, without regard to political or religious affiliation in the past. Dr. Joseph Tiso, president of the Party, proclaimed categorically:

"Hlinka's Slovak People's Party in its struggle for the rights of the Slovak nation has never made a partisan affair of the great idea of the nation. It has always tried to unite all Slovaks into the union which we have now achieved. And as in that fight, so now in the building of free Slovakia, we do not exclude a single Slovak, but conversely, we invite every one who thinks sincerely and well with the Slovak nation, because we want all Slovak minds and all Slovak hands to work together for the welfare of the Slovak nation" (TISOVA NÁUKA, dr. Štefan Polakovič, page 214).

It was in this spirit that the Party actually began the building of the new Slovakia. No one was driven from public life — not even the Slovaks who for twenty years served foreign interests for personal gain — nor were the adherents of the Communist Party deprived of bread. All got a chance to do something and acquire property, something they could never have even dreamed to get in the Czechoslovak Republic.

This spirit of Christian conciliation and national tolerance carried within itself, of course, certain dangers, as was demonstrated later. What the Party and its leadership did in 1939 in the interest of the unity of the nation, many former servants of Prague centralism and international communism regarded as a weakness and began to upset the nice ideas of the new Slovak life, being aided in this work by some dissatisfied elements in the ranks of the HSPP itself.

After an objective study of the program, ideology and practical policy of the HSPP, is it possible to say truthfully that the Party was a fascist or Nazi party, which necessarily means also an anti-Christian party? Did it imitate foreign models or did it grow out of non-Slovak traditions and needs? There is only one truthful answer to these questions: Certainly not!

During the war even the propagandists of Dr. Edward Beneš were quite careful what they said publicly about the HSPP. Only the regime of Lettrich and Husák labeled the HSPP as fascist and nazi so that they could have an excuse for confiscating the property of the HSPP and for persecuting its representatives.

Dr. Kúnoši, present Ambassador of Czechoslovakia to Buenos Aires, published a book about the Czecho-Slovak problem with an introduction by Lord Cecil. In it this son of former commissar Béla Khun reluctantly proves that the Party was not nazi or fascist by quoting from speeches of leading factors of the HSPP. For example, he quotes the following from a speech of Dr. Joseph Tiso (3-16-40):

"We want to attain not what we admire in other nations, but what happens in the circumstances to be possible. When the productive conditions of each class are different, we do not mechanically bring all classes to a common denominator: we introduce a corporative system."

About the time when the HSPP and the HG (Hlinka Guard) fought bitterly for the leadership in the nation and state, Kúnoši writes:

"While Mach claimed for the Guard the directorship of the Government, Dr. Kirschbaum, as the Party's Secretary General, was saying: The party sees to it that political and ideological development should not depart from the Slovak national tradition and that by means of the party the people should take part in directing the policy

of the State" (A. Kúnoši, *THE BASIS OF CZECHOSLOVAK UNITY*, London, 1944, pages 63, 76).

And Kúnoši quotes other expressions which tell us that the HSPP did not change its Christian-National program even after the proclamation of Slovak independence. Quoting from an interview which the Secretary General (Kirschbaum) of the HSPP had with the editor of the "Hrvatska Straž" (The Croatian Guard) on March 13, 1940, Kúnoši writes:

"The programme of the Hlinka Populist Party has not altered even after the dizzy changes which brought about the declaration of our independence. Just as Andrej Hlinka embodied the aims of the party in the slogan 'For God and Nation,' so this doctrine has been taken over by the party's present leader, Dr. Tiso" (Idem, page 64).

Certainly, because of the difficult war situation and the pressure exerted by Germany on the whole of Europe, the HSPP and its leadership were not always successful in making Slovak politics in the interest of the nation as they wished. But, on the whole, the HSPP kept Slovakia away from every ideological influence which was not compatible with Christianity and Slovak traditions. After Salzburg (July 1940), the HSPP had at first very little influence on practical policy of the Government and, therefore, cannot be held responsible for it. But the HSPP and its president Dr. Joseph Tiso certainly deserve credit for the fact that even the most delicate problems were solved in Slovakia in a much more humane manner than in the other states of central Europe. It is also to the credit of the HSPP and Tiso that nazism did not spread among the Slovaks more than it did. And the HSPP certainly was responsible for the fact that Slovakia, despite the tense international situation, not only fared well and safeguarded personal and property rights, but in fact enjoyed more freedom and democracy than she did under the regime of Dr. Beneš and Dr. Lettrich after 1945.

"Not a single political execution took place in the Slovak State," we read in a booklet issued by Lettrich's Bureau of Information in 1946. And the International Committee of the Red Cross has it recorded in an official report that "at definite periods Slovakia was actually regarded as a relative asylum for Jews, especially those from Poland. The Jews that remained in Slovakia were comparatively safe until the revolt which took place at the end of August 1944" (*Revue Internationale de la Croix Rouge*, 1947, N. 348, pgs. 957-959).

Therefore, considering the difficult war conditions and the situation in which the Slovak nation was left by Dr. Beneš in 1938, it can be said quite frankly that the HSPP actually did more than was expected of it. The party saved the nation and its substance at a time when it was faced with physical and spiritual ruin.

After his flight from "liberated" Czecho-Slovakia that was also admitted by one of the leaders of Lettrich's regime, who wrote confidentially:

"The fact remains, that a significant part of the politicians of the Slovak People's Party and especially its the populace was not inclined to fascism and it prevented its spread so effectively that, excepting retaliations against Jews and Communists, no special actions were undertaken against the vast majority of the people.

"And so, with regard to the fact that Slovak people managed the affairs in Slovakia, we can hardly speak of treason and collabora-

tion — like the Communists tried to do in order to frighten the people and create chaos, so that they could come to power."

Nevertheless, Lettrich's regime planted a forest of gallows instead of trees of freedom, and Hlinka's Slovak People's Party was not only outlawed, but its members were exposed to the most cruel persecution recorded in Slovak history.

* * * *

THE SLOVAKS AND COMMUNISM

KAROL SIDOR

For ages our Slovak program has been identical both at home and in America. Only the forms and the time of its realization change. The basis of our program remains the adherence to God as the Creator of heaven and earth on Whom all things depend. We do not recognize any regime or state in which God has no place, or which enacts laws that are directly opposed to God and the faith.

That is why we proclaim ourselves against Bolshevism and against everything that leads to it. We are against Bolshevism for fundamental reasons and not because Bolshevism has taken our properties, driven us from our homes, or because it has imprisoned or killed some members of our families.

To America have come such politicians who praised Bolshevism and co-governed with Bolsheviks. But when Bolshevism deprived them of political power and material wealth, in a word when Bolshevism harmed them materially, only then did they take a stand against it. These men oppose Communism for material reasons, whereas we Slovaks stand opposed to it for ideological reasons, for religious reasons.

Our own Louis Stur wrote in his work "The Slovanic Peoples and the World of the Future" — written over a hundred years ago, in 1849:

"Communism has arrived at the same goal as atheism and apostasy from Christianity. In every form of Communism the outlook on life is gloomy, bereft of every tender joy. It leads to the most cruel slavery. Communism, let it pretend and endeavor as it will to make mankind share in all rights, nevertheless knows nothing about humanity. It degrades human beings. It belongs among the most senseless innovations thus far hatched out of the human mind."

After the first world war, when Bolshevism came into power in Russia, Pope Pius XI wrote quite clearly in his "Quadragesimo Anno" that liberalism had helped social democracy come into the world. He said: "Let us bear in mind that the parent of this cultural Socialism was Liberalism, and that its offspring was Bolshevism." The Holy Father warned the rulers of the world when he further said: "We cannot contemplate without profound sorrow the heedlessness of those who seem to make light of these imminent dangers and with stolid indifference allow the propagation far and wide of those doctrines which seek by violence and bloodshed the destruction of all society. Even more severely must be condemned the foolhardiness of those who neglect to remove or modify such conditions as exasperate the minds of the people, and so prepare the way for the overthrow and ruin of the social order."

Allow me, if you will, to quote from my speech of November 6, 1935 — the speech which I addressed directly to Minister Edward Beneš in his presence, when in the Prague Parliament he presented for approval the first Soviet-Czech Pact concluded by himself. It was then — in 1935 — that I told the members of the Prague Parliament:

"We reject Bolshevism and its bloody practice, as well as its inhumane methods. We do not unite our national future with the future of the Soviet Union. We do not build on the agreements which the Bolsheviks undersign. I consider it the greatest mistake that Mr. Minister Beneš has ever made in foreign policy. He has had the borders of the State guaranteed, though he knows that Bolshevism recognizes no state borders, because it recognizes the borders of only one state — the World Soviet Republic. We Slovaks do not wish to connect our fate with that of the Soviet Union and we shall vote no confidence to such a policy of Mr. Minister Beneš."

Today we know that we always were on the right road. Publicly and openly in parliament, at our rallies and in our Slovak Press. But the mistake was that the great ones of this world — as Pius XI expressed it — viewed those things with a stolid indifference and made light of those imminent dangers which threatened society.

What can the Pope do? What can the Church do in this case? Why the first thing that the modern State did was to separate the State from the Church. People in power separated it and then went their own way, according to their laws and reasoning, degrading Christ's teaching which the Church preaches and recalls for us constantly.

We had strayed far. I could quote you from many speeches of Hlinka, Tiso and Razus that went unheeded. Don't believe the priests, that was the fashion of the day — and Hlinka was a priest, so was Tiso, and so was Razus. So the statesmen did not believe them, because — well, what did a priest know anyway? They were not concerned with their politics, but only with what they and other priests preached about Christ's gospel in the churches.

If there is any nation in the world that is anti-communist, that nation certainly is the Slovak nation. The Slovaks never did want Communism, and voted against it when Soviet armies occupied Slovakia. But little Slovakia cannot herself liberate the half of Europe that is in the hands of the Bolsheviks. In this case the nations must unite and win for themselves true freedom.

Americans of Slovak descent have already long ago accepted as their motto: Fight against Communism, Fascism and Nazism. The last two -isms have just about been wiped out. Now the fight is commencing against the greatest evil the world has ever known — against Communism. Americans of Slovak descent must unite as one man under the banner of the Slovak League of America, which has for the past 43 years led them well in public policy. All good Slovaks trust the Slovak League of America and support it financially and morally.

General Montecuccoli once said: To wage war three things are needed: 1. Money; 2. Money; and 3. MONEY! And the fight against Communism is, indeed, a war that must be waged to the finish. Every good Slovak — as every patriotic American — is proud to go along

with the Slovak League of America to help crush the greatest scourge of mankind — godless Communism.

If, then, in all seriousness, you have understood the words of the Holy Father that Communism is really an imminent danger, if you believe what your relatives write you about life in Slovakia under Communism, then take action that this scourge of humanity does not overtake you here in America and enslave you as it has enslaved millions of people after World War I and more millions after World War II.

My advice to my countrymen in America: Join the ranks of the Slovak League of America, support it financially and morally so that it might actually fulfill its mission among our Slovak people in America in the fight against Communism and the liberation of our Slovak nation.

* * * *

WHO SAID IT?

"In Prague we guarded ourselves against the impending catastrophe as best we could. One of the ways that led to this we sought in cooperation with the SOVIET UNION and in its direct participation in the politics of Europe and Geneva. **From the year 1927, when Commissar M. Litvinov first came to Geneva, to the session of the preparatory disarmament commission, in friendly and constant contact with him and his comrades I never ceased trying that we work together on the exchange of ideas and friendship. Already then I stressed to him some of the main principles of our politics, above all else, that Czechoslovakia was convinced that without the participation of the Soviet Union in the politics of Europe and especially that of Central Europe, German preponderance in Europe would again be renewed and threaten European peace. . . . I considered the entrance of the Soviet Union into the League of Nations in September 1934 as a triumph of peace politics, and the undersigning of the French and our treaties with the Soviet Union as the beginning of a new French and Czechoslovak policy, that would bind the Soviet Union to Western Europe and would create collaboration of the East with the West, absolutely necessary to prevent the expansion of Hitler's Germany to the East, and thereby also to the West.**" — Dr. Edward Beneš, MEMOIRS, 1947.

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"The alliance with the USSR is the most important guarantee of peaceful development and progress of Czechoslovakia and without the alliance with the USSR we cannot imagine a free and independent Czechoslovakia." — Klement Gottwald, Moscow broadcast, 7-19-47; ČAS, 7-12-47.

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"Czechoslovakia, an ally of Soviet Russia, which is a Slav country, is willing to be a friend of and to come to an agreement with all nations that wish to be friendly, provided that such agreements come within the scope of Czechoslovakia's present-day alliances and within the scope of the United Nations Charter. **OUR TWENTY-YEAR TREATY WITH SOVIET RUSSIA IS AND WILL REMAIN THE KEYSTONE OF OUR FOREIGN POLICY.** We also have a treaty with Yugoslavia of the same duration." — (Jan Masaryk, NEW YORK TIMES 2-13-47).

ABOUT THE SLOVAK STATE

(ks) — An anonymous Slovak had an article published in a Czech paper about the origin of the Slovak State. That's the way Czech Slovaks (CZECHOSLOVAKS!) do business, and the Czechs, of course, gladly give them space in their papers. Philosophizing on the subject of the origin of the Slovak Republic, the author of the article asks several questions:

1. Did the Slovak parliament decide freely (when it voted the independence of Slovakia in March 1939)?

Yes, it did. It decided that freely and unanimously. Not one Deputy of the Slovak parliament remained seated; all stood up and so voted for Slovak state independence. No one forced them to stand up. At least one could have remained seated and so indicate a negative vote; but, I repeat, not one Deputy remained seated.

2. Was the "Berlin order" in line with the will of the nation?

No "order" was concerned. Karol Sidor, as Premier of the Slovak Government, refused in the name of the Slovaks to execute an "order" at that time, when he told Keppler, Seys-Inquart and Bürckel — who had come to him to Bratislava on March 12, 1939, — that he would not go to Berlin or to Vienna to proclaim the independence of Slovakia by radio. He told them that was the function of the Party and the Slovak parliament. If Sidor would have gone to Germany and there proclaimed the independence of Slovakia, that would have been effected by German order. The Germans wanted the proclamation over the radio, whereas the Slovaks wanted their parliament to do the proclaiming.

Two days later the Slovaks willed it that their parliament proclaim the independence of their country. The voting in parliament on March 14, 1939, was no kind of "Berlin order." It does not matter that the elected deputies voted for it. That the deputies voted for it unanimously strongly emphasizes the fact that the Slovak nation as a whole, through its duly elected representatives, voiced itself for its own state.

3. Did the deputies have any right to do what they did?

The representatives of a sovereign nation have the right to do anything within the limits of the laws of the land. The only thing they probably could not do — as an old Slovak saying states it — would be to make a boy out of a girl. They certainly had a greater right to speak for the nation than did the formulators of the Martin Declaration, the underwriters of the Pittsburgh Pact, or the deputies in the Revolutionary National Assembly, who in 1920 voted for the Constitution of the first Czechoslovak Republic, or the self-styled "deputies" of Communists and Democrats of 1944-45, who divided up the power over Slovakia on a 50-50 basis in such a "brotherly" fashion in the forests of Banská Bystrica.

4. How is it possible even now to celebrate such sorrowful anniversaries of our recent past (as the proclamation of the independence of Slovakia)?

There are, indeed, "sorrowful anniversaries in our recent past," but the 14th of March, 1939, does not belong among them. Neither formally, nor by content. Among such sad anniversaries, however, do belong all those acts that tied up with any collaboration with native Communism from Christmas of 1943 and with Moscow collaboration since 1945. March 14, 1939, definitely is not responsible for the atrocities and blunders committed by and with the aid of Beneš and his Red Prague regime since 1945.

Say what you will, in politics only successes count. The life of the Slovaks after 1945 is replete with sufferings, deportations to the USSR, concentration camps, disfranchisements, dispossessions and political murders.

Even the avowed enemies of Slovak freedom and independence — former members of the NATIONAL FRONT of Czechoslovakia (Lettrich, Zenkl, Heidrich, Ducháček, etc.) — have admitted that conditions in Slovakia are worse today than they were under the Nazis. The Czechs, too, are worse off now than they were under Hitler. And we believe it. But the Czechs have absolutely no right to deny the Slovaks the same freedom and independence and "liberation" that they themselves are clamoring and pleading for today.

The Slovaks have learnt their lesson well. T. G. Masaryk and Edward Beneš ignored their just demands for twenty years. Today their followers still insist that the Slovaks have no right to their own national existence and their own independent state. So don't blame the Slovaks for proclaiming:

"NEVER DO WE WANT TO BE A PART OF ANY OLD OR NEW CZECHOSLOVAKIA!"

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WHO SAID IT?

"The Soviet Union **SINCERELY** desires a strong, consolidated, fully homogeneous Czechoslovak republic which would be a truly good and strong friend and a collaborator of the Soviet people in the future defense of a lasting peace in Europe. The same wish also applies to the future of Poland. The Soviet Union not only desires good and friendly relations with her but also a strong Polish-Czechoslovak friendship and collaboration." — Dr. Edward Beneš, THE NEW YORK TIMES, 12-23-43.

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"The Czechoslovak republic is, just as it had been, a democratic state that respects freedom of convictions and viewpoints, a state that always respected and even in the future shall respect, above all else, freedom of religion, the church and religious culture. **It is an independent state and independent it shall remain.** It is a state that has always upheld, above all else, objectivity and full tolerance toward the convictions and religious belief of all its citizens. **It is a state that has respected the well-known Four Freedoms of President F. D. Roosevelt** and today is applying them in a practical way in its set-up. That is how it is today and so shall it be even in the future." — Dr. Edward Beneš, Prague, April 8, 1946. (NÁROD, 4-17-46).

A FREE SLOVAKIA IN A FEDERATED EUROPE

(EZ) What chances have the Slovaks for an independent state?

The answer to that question depends on one's outlook, his knowledge of the Slovak people and his knowledge of Europe as a whole. The Slovak people think they have a fair chance to re-establish the Slovak Republic. The Slovaks at home and in emigration firmly believe that their national existence depends on establishing a free Slovakia in a federated Europe. It is said that every nation has as much freedom as it deserves and as much as it can gain by fighting. Well, the Slovaks at home and abroad are willing to fight for their freedom and independence. They want to prove it. But they want a little understanding and encouragement from the democratic powers which have on so many occasions proclaimed that all nations, both large and small, have a God-given and inherent right to freedom and statehood.

In the first place, let us remember that the Slovaks already have had an independent state. The Slovak Republic existed from 1939 to 1945, of course with limitations. But they liked it nevertheless. Slovakia has its state tradition, even though it be relatively a merge one. The Slovak state was recognized by 27 nations. And it gave a good account of itself culturally, economically and socially. The Slovaks have proved to the Czechs and their neighbors that they are capable of managing their own affairs. Every informed, objective and unprejudiced observer will admit that the Slovak Republic was democratic, Christian and sublime. Slovak national economy has forever refuted the thesis that the Slovaks could not maintain themselves economically. What they did in six short years, but six difficult years, practically amounts to a miracle.

A nation which has tasted of the fruit of freedom will hardly be satisfied with less thereafter. The Slovaks are no exception. They will fight to be free again! They have been overpowered and forced to retreat against terrible odds. What hurts most is that the powers who sought to liberate all nations from totalitarian tyranny arbitrarily forced Slovakia under alien rule and the godless tyranny of Moscow through the pseudodemocrat Beneš.

The Slovak state with its positive achievements has inscribed itself deeply on the soul of the whole Slovak nation. Many Slovaks who once were against Slovak statehood, (the Beneš or Czech Slovaks: CZECHOSLOVAKS!) today are for an independent Slovak Republic. If Slovaks could vote in freedom at the present time, there is not the least doubt that at least 95% would vote for an independent Slovak State.

Never before did the Slovak nation have such a large number of sons in exile as it has today. It is a fighting group of exiles, with its sights on a free, democratic Slovakia. These Slovak exiles are deeply grateful to Americans of Slovak descent. The Slovak people at home and non-partisan exiles in all parts of the world think highly of the work of the Slovak League of America, the organization which represents a solid moral and cultural value. When this material and spiritual potential is once put into motion, it undoubtedly will intervene effectively at the decisive moment. The syste-

matic work of the League in this direction and its realistic Slovak outlook are more than a promise.

What other facts portend the establishment of a Slovak state?

Old enemies of the Slovak people have been decimated by the bolshevik steam roller. In the second (some call it the third) Czechoslovak Republic, the Czech leadership committed many blunders which have nothing in common with democracy, Christianity, humanity, and culture. Just a single example to illustrate: **the resolution of the Sudeten question!**

Furthermore, the Czechs under Beneš's leadership set up Communism in Czechoslovakia. This is becoming increasingly clear to every objective observer. Beneš prepared the way for Moscow into Czechoslovakia. When Beneš died, the press of Switzerland, France and Italy described him as a "traitor of democracy, a senile politician who could not see clearly" and led not only his nation, but the Slovak people also into bolshevik slavery. The legend of Czech political realism," on which the Czechs had counted so much, burst like a soap bubble.

Colonies are not very fashionable today. Even the most backward countries are yearning for independence, for statehood. De Gasperi, Italian Premier, has proclaimed more than once that the days of colonies are gone forever; Italy is through with colonizing, because it is against the spirit of the times. The Czechs have exploited Slovakia as their colony. The Slovaks cannot be and do not want to be a Czech colony.

The representatives of central European nations are working for a federation, for a just and democratic arrangement of the region between Russia and Germany. This is in favor of the establishment of an independent Slovakia. The Slovaks at home and in exile are for such a federation of which Slovakia would be an integral part. Admitting Czechoslovakia as a unit within such a federation would not be a just and democratic settlement of the problem of central Europe because the Slovaks would continue to be exploited and gradually exterminated nationally by the Czechs.

Bolshevism is a world problem. The world will have to measure its strength with Communism sooner or later. But the Slovaks know that they themselves must settle their problem with the Czechs and the so-called "Czech Slovaks." Experience tells them not to under-rate the Czechs. The Slovaks have already been "taken in" by the Czechs several times by trickery, clever propaganda and legal hypocrisy. Czech emigration is still aggressive and financially strong. Because of their many political, cultural and business connections, the Czechs still have access to high diplomatic circles and influential people. They want to keep Slovakia, because it has been "such a good milch cow"!

The Czechs do not openly claim that they need Slovakia as a dumping ground for their "progressive intelligentsia, but the fact is that in their hearts they firmly believe it. They want Slovakia, because of German pressure and fear of German reprisals for the brutalities committed against the Sudetenlanders. The Czechs need to revitalize themselves with Slovak blood and the sinews of young Slovakia. Indeed, Beneš himself admitted that the continued existence of Czechoslovakia is a vital interest of the Czechs, hence the Czechs

must ever oppose the creation of a free and independent Slovakia. Well, the Slovaks figure they shall have something to say about the matter, as rightly they should have. And no one can blame them for wanting to live their own lives and being masters of their destiny.

The Slovaks know, too, that the "Czech Slovaks" — the Slovak traitors — are no less dangerous than the imperialistic Beneš Czechs. They are the Janissaries. The Slovaks do not underestimate the Czechs, who have been and still are plying a systematic politico-diplomatic game, the goal of which is the denial and suppression of the natural and fundamental rights of the Slovak nation.

One day world Communism shall be liquidated. And Czechoslovakism, the handmaid of Communism, must be liquidated also. The fiction of an ethnical "Czechoslovak nation" must be discarded for all times. Czechoslovakia was a mistake, an illusion, politically and morally an unprofitable creation, but for the Czechs it still is a reality and an ideal. The Slovaks are aware of this and are just as determined that they shall never again be subject to the rule of the Czechs when the plague of Communism is vanquished.

• • •

OUR FIGHT FOR DEMOCRACY AND INDEPENDENCE

DR. JOSEPH KIRSCHBAUM

Since 1945 Slovaks in emigration have frequently stated that the goal of their struggle is a democratic and independent Slovakia. The leaders of Slovak exiles can support their declarations not only by their lifetime fight against communism, but also by their resistance to efforts to introduce the nazi system in Slovakia. The group which later collaborated with the communists — the so-called "Czechoslovaks" (Czech Slovaks!) — cannot and should not be counted among the patriotic Slovaks who opposed the nazi avalanche from 1940. Hlinka's Slovak Peoples Party, headed by President Joseph Tiso, fought against nazism and communism then, and today the members of that party in exile form the first fighting line against communism.

It is a fact that after the meeting in Salzburg in 1940, when the group around Prof. Tuka attempted to force National Socialism on the Slovaks in the attempt to prevent drastic intervention by the Germans in Slovak public life, it was not the present adherents of Czechoslovakia (the so-called "Czechoslovaks") — later the self-styled "anti-fascist warriors" — who lost their high positions, but the leaders of Slovak national emigration. That the attempt to force National Socialism on the Slovaks failed, that, too, cannot be credited to those who today denounce Slovaks in exile as fascists and nazis. At that time most of the "Czech Slovaks" were busy getting fat jobs, waxing rich and living in luxury. Their main worry was not to lose the favor of the regime. Their first attempts to "revolt" did not happen in 1939 or 1940, but only in 1944, when the outcome of the war was pretty clear. But even then they were not interested in fighting for democracy, but rather in fighting to retain the riches and the high functions they had attained in the Slovak State. The few persons among them who fought for democracy and Slovak interests are even today fighting, at home and abroad, for an independent, democratic Slovak republic.

Many Slovaks in various lands may be tempted to ask: How, then, is it possible to explain this relentless campaign against Slovak nationals in emigration, the attempts to smear and discredit them in the eyes of the world?

The answer is simple.

This whole undemocratic assault against patriotic Slovaks, fighting in exile for an independent Slovak State, emanates basically from two causes:

1. The "Czechoslovaks," serving Czech imperial interests by betraying the highest interests of their own people, wish to divert attention from their collaboration with communism by smearing and vilifying patriotic Slovaks.

2. By accusing patriotic Slovaks in democratic countries of nazism and fascism, a part of the Czech emigrants and the Slovak renegades collaborating with them, figure that they can neutralize their fight for an independent Slovak State and force the Slovaks again under Czech rule.

Those Czech and Slovak emigrants who claim that Slovak nationals want a fascist or nazi state know very well that is not true. They propagate this lie intentionally and systematically in the hope that by repeating it thousands of times they shall again succeed in convincing the world that the Slovak nation does not want to live in a state of its own, but only in their Czecho-Slovakia. They are determined that the Slovaks shall be victims of Czech imperialistic efforts and Slovakia shall be a colony of Bohemia.

In short: all Slovaks who believe that Slovakia has a right to be free and independent and seek to have that right recognized and respected by all civilized nations of the earth are, according to the Beneš Czechs and Czech Slovaks, "nazis, traitors, fascists, enemies of democracy," etc. In 1946, Dr. Edward Beneš frankly told a Slovak delegation why the Czechs are fighting against Slovak independence, when he said:

"The Czechs cannot accept under any circumstances an independent Slovakia in the future. . . . The Czechs, having on the one side 70 million Germans, must on the other side have Russia as their neighbor. Therefore, they could not accept an independent Slovakia. This is a vital problem for the existence of the Czechs as a nation and a state and that is also the lesson of Munich...."

Czech emigration, holding to this political legacy of Beneš, realizes that the greatest impediment to its efforts are patriotic Slovaks in exile. Slovaks can appreciate Beneš's concern for the Czechs, but they, too, are concerned about their own national existence. The statement made by Beneš certainly has nothing in common with democracy. It reminds us of Adolph Hitler who thought that all nations of central and eastern Europe should be deprived of freedom and independence and forced to serve the interests of the German nation. It also reminds us of Stalin who would enslave the whole world and force all nations to serve the interests of godless communism.

Slovak patriots stand in the way of this Czech imperialist dream, so the followers of Beneš are determined to annihilate them at all costs. That explains why they accuse the Slovaks of being nazis and fascists. That also explains their ridiculous accusation that the Slo-

vaks in exile are not fighting for democracy, but for the renewal of fascism in central Europe.

Undoubtedly it is not necessary to stress that this fight against Slovak emigrants is immoral and undemocratic, because its goal is immoral and undemocratic. To want to deprive the Slovak nation of the right to freedom and independence because the interests of the Czechs "as a nation and a state" demand it, that is a manifestation of the most brutal imperialism — such as even the Germans did not perpetrate against the Slovaks. Can anyone of sane mind expect the Slovaks in exile to agree to commit national suicide?

It is not so much the past that separates the Slovaks and Czechs in emigration as the fact that while the Slovak exiles are fighting for freedom and democracy in central Europe, the Czech exiles headed by Zenkl, Ripka and Papánek are fighting, in the first place, to prevent the Slovaks from attaining freedom and independence. The main task of the Czech exiles is not the fight against Communism, but the fight against the Slovaks, who want the Slovak nation to be fully free and happy in its own democratic state.

• • •

WHO SAID IT?

"Simultaneously we accepted the principle that only our people at home have the right to decide the main problems of our internal policy, and that also the relation between the Czechs and Slovaks be decided in the future state only at home, based on the principle of COMPLETE EQUALITY of both Czechs and Slovaks and that it be done in a free, democratic way and in complete brotherly agreement. These were the main principles on which we have built our movement for liberation. This ideology of our struggle for liberation, CONNECTED WITH OUR COMPLETE PRO-SOVIET ORIENTATION, and our ideology of the second World War in general was one of the main causes for the success of the entire struggle." — (Dr. Beneš, Broadcast to the Czechoslovak people, Prague, May 16, 1945).

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There is no Russian "iron curtain" in Czechoslovakia. . . . Everyone is free to enter Czechoslovakia and to come and go as he pleases, to see what he wants to see and hear what he wants to hear. Furthermore Czechs and Slovaks are MASTERS in their own country. There is no Russian army on Czechoslovak soil and Moscow IS NOT INTERFERING with Czechoslovak internal affairs. . . . The press, radio, the school and the church are FREE to carry on their activities AS BEFORE." — (Dr. Kenneth D. Miller, president of the New York City Mission Society, in an address at the weekly church night dinner at the First Presbyterian Church, 124 Henry Street, New York City, published in the BROOKLYN DAILY EAGLE, Nov. 12, 1947).

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"I agree with you fully that our alliance with the SOVIET UNION will help us to a better security of FREEDOM in the future, and I am happy to have seen our political orientation FROM THE BEGINNING OF THIS WAR and to have acted accordingly." — (Dr. Beneš, Reply to a message from the Slovak National Council in Košice, London, March 2, 1945).

ABOUT THE COUNCIL OF FREE CZECHOSLOVAKIA

(Jk) — Thirty years ago Czech political exiles adopted the motto: "Truth Prevails." At that time T. G. Masaryk led the fight to establish a common state of two legally equal nations — the Czechs and the Slovaks. Masaryk, we know, was successful, and Czecho-Slovakia was born after World War I.

After Masaryk two generations went to battle under this motto. But the motto "Truth Prevails" has backfired on them. The truth did prevail, but at the expense of Czech emigration and against its intentions. Recently it happened to the Czech emigrants and their Slovak fellow-travelers organized in the so-called "Council of Free Czechoslovakia."

The institution was presented by its founders as loyal to democracy and fighting for democracy, and its members and directors pose as martyrs of democracy. Under this disguise they got into the USA. But the truth will out! Some of the more serious Czech emigrants, who do not have their hands sullied by collaborating with the Communists, decided to tear the mask of lies from the faces of the leaders of the Council of Free Czechoslovakia.

A leading Czech journalist, the eminent Dr. Helen Koželuh found that the CFC was an undemocratic and totalitarian institution and its representatives were responsible for many crimes, as well as collaborating with Communism. She tells in detail why she did so in an article published in "Návrat" (THE RETURN), Paris. It would be interesting to reproduce the whole article, but space in the SLOVAK NEWSLETTER is limited. A few paragraphs, that fully characterize the people and the policy of the Council, ought to convince our readers that the SN was right in its appraisal of the CFC right from the start.

"The CFC (Council of Free Czechoslovakia) is a totalitarian and undemocratic institution," writes Dr. Koželuh. "I am a confirmed democrat. I have no right to remain in this organization. I had some justification as long as I could have the impression that the will to amend its ways did exist. Evidently the CFC had no intentions of amending its ways and I would have to lie if I wanted to state that I believe otherwise. Certainly I am sorry that I cannot recognize the CFC as a uniform resistance organ, because I know that it would be well if a uniform resistance organ could exist. However, I cannot give preference to unity before democracy, because experience has taught us that we fled from uniformity and because of the loss of democracy."

"I made a mistake — and this I confess openly — that I did not at first deduce the consequences from the fact that the CFC is not a democratic organ, but a self-appointed continuer of the NATIONAL FRONT, and that not only with its representatives, but with its ideology as well. The spirit of the Košice program, against which I fought in vain at home and from which I was fortunate to escape, has conquered in the CFC. It would be not only illogical, but also dishonest to support that which I rightly considered as the ruination of any nation."

That is what Dr. Koželuh thinks of the CFC as an institution. She also had something to say about its representatives:

"I wanted to believe that the people, who were members of the National Front and had approved the Košice program, realized that they had blundered and committed many mistakes and that they would endeavor to make amends for the crimes which they had unanimously approved either because of their insufficiency or their insufficient understanding. It is true that the full measure of responsibility for everything that has happened or is happening in our country falls on the government and political factors of the National Front. There is no argument about the fact that the Communist Party at home was in the minority and could always have been outvoted. However, that did not happen, so, we can safely say that all laws, regulations and decrees were passed by non-Communist votes, that is the votes of those (the CFC) who now want to rule here, judge us and make decisions over us."

Dr. Helen Koželuh also says that the factors of the National Front "knew well that their own parties could oust them from the leadership of their respective parties for their past catastrophic blunders and, so, they proclaimed themselves as personalities independent of their parties and, therefore, unseatable. This is perhaps the first case in history where people proclaimed themselves as personalities because their work proved to be bad and ruinous for the nation. Undoubtedly, they could not expect others to do that for them and, therefore, these bunglers by mutual agreement elevated themselves mutually to the position of personalities. I proclaim with a full knowledge of responsibility that this shady undertaking is the most foolish and most transparent attempt to deceive their own and other political parties that has ever happened and only a fool would be taken in and believe it."

The above should be sufficient to condemn the institution of collaborators with Communism who are responsible for the bloody tragedy of the Czech and Slovak nations, for all the crimes and murders committed in Bohemia and in Slovakia since 1945.

* * * *

WHO SAID IT?

"Beneš defends tie with Russia. — Dec. 25. — President Edward Beneš advised Czechoslovak politicians in a broadcast last night to avoid making a bitter parliamentary campaign issue of the nation's alliance with Russia. The President, reiterating a promise of free, secret elections next spring, said that alliance with Russia should be regarded as a CORNERSTONE OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA'S POLICY." — NEW YORK TIMES, 12-26-45.

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"London, Feb. 19. — The Czechoslovak Government in Exile will leave London next week for Kosice in Slovakia, where a temporary capital will be established until Prague is freed. The group will travel via MOSCOW. This fact gave rise to ERRONEOUS reports that while there President Eduard Benes would consult the Soviet Government about the composition of his Government. This was flatly denied by the Government here." — NEW YORK TIMES, 2-20-45.

TRUTH AND LEGEND ABOUT

THE ORIGIN OF CZECHO-SLOVAKIA

(jk) — On October 28th some of the Beneš Czechs and the so-called Czech Slovaks (Czechoslovaks!) celebrated the 32nd anniversary of the foundation of the Czechoslovak Republic. Patriotic and democratic Czechs and Slovaks, however, had nothing to celebrate on that date. In fact, they were glad to forget about it.

And yet, less than fifteen years ago that day was a Slovak holiday. Of course, the majority of the Slovak nation already then did not celebrate the event with enthusiasm, because the short-sighted policy of the Prague regimes had been unbelievably successful in making enemies of the entire non-Czech population — the majority of the population of Czecho-Slovakia — and especially of the Slovaks. But even under the prevailing circumstances, the Slovaks still were in favor of the Czechoslovak Republic. And it probably would be safe to say that the Slovaks at home were as much for Czechoslovakia at that time as the Slovaks in the United States, Russia, Italy and the Allied fronts were in its establishment during World War I.

A State, however, is not the supreme value in the democratic and Christian books of values. It is, according to modern, democratic science on statecraft, only a means that is supposed to make possible the physical and spiritual life of a nation. And a nation must not die with the support of institutions which were ordained to preserve it. (vd. Paul Janet, HISTOIRE DE LA SCIENCE POLITIQUE DANS SES RAPPORTS AVEC LA MORALE, PARIS, 1887).

But the Masaryk and Beneš regimes did place the Czechoslovak State above the Slovak nation. Their policy did seek the destruction of the Slovak nation. Such a policy certainly could not be expected to gain the sympathy of the Slovak people. The Slovaks resisted it resolutely. And that was only natural. The Czech professor, Dr. J. Bušek, said the Slovak nation was performing a miracle which in no small measure must be credited to bad Czech politics. The more Prague oppressed it, the more self-conscious the Slovak nation became. And this enhanced the political development of the Slovaks.

The Slovak nation, which Dr. Bušek claimed had developed more in the twenty years within the framework of Czechoslovakia than it had in the entire century of Magyar domination, could not be satisfied with a solution that prevented its spiritual and material expansion. It traveled the same path taken by other Central-European nations and wended its way from cohabitation in common units to autonomy and then to independence. When the Slovaks proclaimed their independence, they were fully aware of the fact that it was the result of a natural tendency of political development, and, therefore, that they were doing what was right.

October 28, 1918, was a milestone in the national development of the Slovaks. But only one of the milestones marking their historical trek from loss of their independence in the tenth century to the acquisition of it again in 1939. March 14, 1939 — Slovak Independence Day — became the State holiday. The circumstances under which the Slovak Republic was born will not alter the significance of this date in the least. In the last centuries, all the states of central and

eastern Europe originated in much the same way. And so did the Czechoslovak Republic.

There exists a variety of legends about the origin of the Czechoslovak Republic, but the truth is only one.

THE LEGEND ABOUT THE ORIGIN OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Prof. T. G. Masaryk and Dr. Edward Beneš created a legend about the origin of the Czechoslovak Republic. According to that legend, the "Czechoslovak nation" existed already in the ninth century. That nation was overcome by the Germans and Hungarians, and the Slovak "branch" was separated from the Czech nation. After a thousand years of enslavement, during World War I, Czech Knights, led by Masaryk and Beneš, waged a heroic struggle against the German and Magyar tyrants and liberated the "Czechoslovak nation" and reestablished its independence.

This fable was propagated as the holy truth not only at home, but also abroad. Here and there slight variations were allowed, but the substance of the legend always had to remain the same: the "Czechoslovak nation", after being subjugated in the ninth century, yearned for a thousand years to live in its own State; it was liberated by the two Czech heroes, Masaryk and Beneš, who fulfilled the ancient dream of the united "Czechoslovak nation" for a common homeland.

A citizen of Czechoslovakia doubting this fable was considered a traitor and an enemy of the State. In his first publication for international consumption ("Détruisez l'Autriche"), Dr. Edward Beneš had stated that the Czechs and Slovaks were "ONE" nation, the Slovaks were only a "BRANCH" of the Czech nation and the Slovak language was only a "DIALECT" of the Czech language, and so it had to be, according to Masaryk and Beneš. To seek equality and justice for the Slovaks was punishable, because they were destined — by Masaryk and Beneš — to strengthen the number of Czechs and perish in the Czech nation so that history once might write another chapter about the heroic exploits of Masaryk and Beneš!

Life, however, has dispelled that legend. Just as it has the rest of the Czech attempts to falsify history, whether "manuscripts" or any other famous deeds were concerned which were supposed to be the foundation of the greatness and claims of some Czech generation. Life does not respect historical romanticisms and does not confuse them with reality. It has its own laws and evolutionary ways, and these hold even in the case of Czechoslovakia. Truth has prevailed, indeed, but it was not the truth acclaimed by Masaryk, who even "originated" the wisdom that "States are preserved by the ideas which originated them" by borrowing it from Sallust!

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE ORIGIN OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA

A part of the Czech emigration — the Beneš Czechs and the Czech Slovaks — are trying to revive the fable of the origin of the Czechoslovak Republic, the mission of Czechoslovakia and the "Czechoslovak Republic, the mission of Czechoslovakia and the "Czechoslovak nation." But the truth remains what it was: the Czechoslovak Republic did not come into being as the result of a 1000-year-old struggle of the "Czechoslovak nation", because such a nation never

existed. International conditions, and especially the intervention of France, were responsible for its origin. Of course, smooth, persistent propaganda has beclouded the truth and supported the legend.

The same Dr. Edward Beneš — who in 1916 proposed to "Destroy Austria" and created the fable that Czechoslovakia was the result of a 1000-year-old struggle of the "Czechoslovak nation" — just a few years prior to that time wrote in his book "*Le Problème Autrichien et la Question Tcheque*" that he did not believe Austria would collapse, because in Bohemia "they saw in independence the greatest danger to national existence and, with the exception of a few radicals, this was the opinion of all sensible (Czech) politicians."

This stand of the Czech nation, not even mentioning that of the Slovak nation, did not change even after Masaryk and Beneš went abroad in 1916 to begin the campaign for the creation of a Czechoslovak Republic. During the entire first World War, Czech politicians and cultural leaders continued to proclaim their loyalty to Austria.

"*Národní Listy*," one of the leading Czech papers, wrote early in 1917: "It is amazing how indefatigably Masaryk endeavors to defile the honor of the Czech nation. The enemies have learned that the love of all Austrian peoples for their inherited dynasty and their Fatherland is firm and unshakable. The enemies have realized that those who abroad make contradictory statements are liars and impostors."

Late in 1916, all the Czech parties in the Austrian parliament, without a single exception, issued a solemn declaration: "The basis and guaranty of the national existence of the Czech people are the dynasty, called to the throne centuries ago, and the indivisibly constituted Monarchy."

And in January 1917, the association of Czech members of parliament sent the following letter to the foreign minister of Austria-Hungary: "In view of the Allied answer to President Wilson in which the liberation of the Czechs figures as a war aim, we reject this insinuation which is based on entirely erroneous assumptions. We declare emphatically that the Czech people, as always in the past, is convinced that it can be assured of a prosperous development only under the Habsburg scepter and within the Habsburg Monarchy."

The same parties asked Prime Minister Clam-Martinitz, a Czech himself, to arrange an audience with the emperor, because "we want to tell His Majesty, that we shall always stand by him and his successors; that our demands shall always be compatible with the interests of the Habsburg dynasty and of the realm; that we are loyal servants of King and Country, that our complaints have never shaken our belief that after victory the claims of the Czech people shall find satisfaction within the framework of the realm and under the Habsburg crown."

Furthermore, the delegates of the Czech socialists at the Stockholm Conference of the Socialist International, in June 1917, voiced their demand for "an independent Czech State within a federated Austria-Hungary."

All this caused F. Peroutka, Czech journalist, to write the following sad commentary in his book "*Budování státu*" (Building of the State): "In all these manifestations the one essential lacking generally

was: a clearly expressed will for freedom. Their leading motive was a persistent effort to have the Austrian Government recognize the loyalty of the Czech nation. During the three years (1914-1917), from what was resounding at home, it was not possible to prove even weakly that the nation at home had any sympathies for the action abroad. It would be much easier to prove that the action abroad was repudiated by these manifestations."

Prof. Bohdan Chudoba, a representative of the younger Czech intellectuals, states only an objective truth, the reality, when he says that the proclamation of the Czechoslovak Republic "was a rather unexpected event." Thomas Masaryk, continues Prof. Chudoba, continued to assure "the leading American personalities as late as the summer of 1918 that there would not be any partition of the Habsburg monarchy. Even the manifesto of the Czech writers, issued in May, 1917, a very radical declaration, did not mention an independent State. And the tenth of President Wilson's famous fourteen points spoke only of an autonomous development of the peoples of Austria-Hungary."

And that is how it actually was.

The foreign activity of the Czechs and Slovaks, in which American Slovaks along with Gen. M. R. Štefánik and the Slovak legionnaires played a major role, was not very successful as far as the matter of the so-called "Czechoslovak nation" was concerned. In the first place, there was no such nation and, secondly, the Czechs were vociferously proclaiming their loyalty to Austria. In Slovakia there was political stagnation.

The destruction of the Habsburg Monarchy was favored by French politicians, especially by Clemenceau. To weaken Germany and gain allies in central Europe in July 1918, the French supported the plan to establish national States on the ruins of Austria-Hungary. The principle of the right of self-determination was supposed to be the basis of this division of the Habsburg Monarchy. This, however, was not adhered to and the new organization of central Europe, of which the Czechoslovak Republic and Yugoslavia were supposed to be the bulwark, proved itself incapable of preservation and collapsed with the first attack from the outside.

Czechoslovakia fell first. No one defended her. And when the Republic was reestablished in 1945, by the grace of Moscow, and annexed by the very same Moscow in 1948, again not a single shot was fired in her defense, nay, not even a single manly protest was made in the defense of Czechoslovakia.

Why should the Slovaks want to live in such a State? And why should they celebrate the anniversary of its origin? In the life of the Slovak nation, the Czechoslovak State was an important milestone. They attained much in Czechoslovakia, but never as much as they were entitled to and as much as they might attain in their own independent State in an European or Central European federation.



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